

Great artists do not necessarily commit their every inspiration to canvas and they are also very critical of their work. Frequently they work over their original efforts until they are satisfied with what they have achieved. So it is worthwhile looking at one of the subjects they have chosen to attempt to express their understandings of the world in which they live. It should also be said that artists are very often not the temperamental, out-of-touch-with-reality, head-in-the-clouds kind of people which is the common parody. As often as not they are down-to-earth pragmatists who have to work for survival like everyone else.

So when they choose a subject like the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary they do so either because the subject means a great deal to them or they know that it means a great deal to others. Their work will be bought and admired. In order to be successful the message must come through the medium of paint. So what is the message? It is a restatement of the Love of God for mankind and that it is possible for mankind to accept and receive that Love even if we do not fully understand the implications of that Love for us.

One of the first ingredients of the scene as it has been portrayed is the expression on the face of the Angel as it approaches Mary; there is a look of concern and gentleness and an understanding of the puzzlement and bewilderment which the Angel knows is in Mary's heart and mind. Then there is the positive acceptance of (rather than submission to) God's message by Mary. There is also sometimes a surprised look on Mary's face as if she is almost saying "Why me?" Most of us would react in the same way if we were confronted by an Angel!

The Church has kept the Feast of the Annunciation from at least the 8th century without a break and so it has emphasised the importance of the event long before any of the modern interpretations were put upon it and certainly long before the medieval cult of Mary evolved. In the Book of Common Prayer we have the only reference to the Blessed Virgin Mary as such. The State for long regarded the 25th March (Lady Day) as a day of importance for legal matters; it was (and is) one of the "quarter days" on which accounts were settled. What does it mean to you and me? Nothing at all? I hope not. I hope that if you know the story already you will re-read it and ponder over its significance; if you do not know the story already find it in S. Luke's Gospel in chapter 1 verses 26-38. We can all ask ourselves the question during Lent "What would I do if I became convinced God was calling me to serve Him?" Remember that Mary was not expecting her visitor.

Nicholas Chubb

DEANERY TRAINING DAY ON PRAYER

On Saturday 11th February the Hampton Deanery had organised a conference at SS Peter and Paul in Teddington to study prayer.

The well organised and well attended day was very stimulating. Talks, group discussions and actual prayer together all contributed to a rewarding experience. In the morning we considered individual prayer. Lunch was an enjoyable affair: the 100 or so participants had brought packed lunches which

were pooled and then shared out again. We could thus choose from a most amazing variety of appetising snacks – a nice idea. In the afternoon Rev. Richard Sowter guided our thoughts on corporate prayer, and the day ended with a short act of worship in the very beautiful modern church.

Personally I found the morning session the most exciting: Rev. Richard Buck gave us a brief resume of the spiritual history of the Church over the past 40 years as he saw it; necessarily simplified to make matters clearer. Understanding this development – he maintained – would help us to recognise why we pray the way we do, and ways forward.

The history of the church is bound up with that of the secular world around it and both have been characterised by dramatic change.

After the enormous upheavals of the war, the 60s proved crucial. They saw a profound shaking of all foundations. In theological terms they saw the end of the age of reason. Enlightenment, embodied in the scholasticism of Thomas Aquinas, the coherent, systematic theology of Karl Barth, Emil Brunner and Paul Tillich were overthrown. The very existence of God was questioned. The external experimentations with new Bible translations and liturgies had a very disturbing effect on prayer life. Confronted with many different versions of everything people had no internalised wealth to draw on. The social changes in the secular world were mirrored in the church. The feminist, ecological and peace movements made themselves felt. A deeper reverence and responsibility towards nature and the human body mark this time. All of which added up to great restlessness and unease. Eric Abbott, Dean of Westminster, spoke of the 60s as the corporate dark night of the church.

Out of this gradually a new understanding grew. During the 70s a readjustment took place towards a more holistic understanding of society and of ourselves. Whereas the charismatic movement illustrates a too violent swing away from an intellectual view to an emotional one (we can't think about God, let's feel Him) gradually a new awareness has grown which links the head and the heart together (people recollect the teaching of Ignatius of Loyola).

Side by side with the masculine, scientific, cerebral, aggressive view – the Yang of Chinese philosophy – there exists in man the feminine, intuitive, contemplative, passive understanding – the Yin. Some profound truths about God are taught by the Spirit direct and can only be grasped in an intuitive way, not proved scientifically. (Interestingly, as the speaker pointed out, science itself has arrived at a new frontier today. Whole concepts are breaking down, and theoretical physicists use terms like simile, imagery, symbolism or even poetry to describe their findings).

So today we find a balanced approach which allows for the head as well as the heart in our striving to be open to God; the contemplative of which Mary is the model (she kept all these things and pondered them in her heart) is granted its importance as well as the body; in prayer, stillness, concentration, breathing count. In worship the whole man comes to God.

Recommended books:

Capra: "The Turning Point"

Sadhana: "A Way to God"

Mark Link, S.J.: "You – Prayer for Beginners and those who have forgotten how".

UNITED SERVICE FOR WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

Locally this year's service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was at the United Reformed Church during the evening of January 22. The preacher at this service was Mr. Raymond Clarke, O.B.E., J.P., M.A. He was one of the representatives of the United Reformed Church at the World Council of Churches Assembly at Vancouver in September of last year.

Mr. Clarke's sermon had as its theme a full and interesting account of this Assembly and its personal implications for himself as a Christian in the United Reformed Tradition living in England in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Mr. Clarke successfully divided this theme into three distinct aspects of personal experience and action. These aspects were meeting a great many Christians from all continents and many countries, receiving from these men and women accounts of Christian experience and witness of great diversity and contrast, and giving to others there and elsewhere a personal contribution of Christian belief and commitment. Mr. Clarke concluded his superb sermon with the challenge to know and share our faith.

On a lighter note Mr. Clarke recalled the problem of understanding and communication among a gathering of so many people from a vast range of countries. Such a formidable problem was no deterrent to the organisers of the Assembly and every available modern aid was applied to give as many opportunities as possible for individuals and groups to meet and discuss their commitment to their one Lord and Saviour. In addition, the sequence of the alphabet ensured that representatives of the United Kingdom, the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics sat near to each other at some of the meetings of the Assembly!

Mr. Clarke stated that he was commissioned as a representative in Liverpool's Roman Catholic Cathedral before travelling to Canada. I am sure that this event in itself should be a cause of thanksgiving among all Christians in our own land where thirty years ago Christian Unity was at a much earlier stage of development than now. To-day our prayers should be offered to God for greater unity and understanding among all Christians who are more united than divided about matters of fundamental belief.

David Dore

THE NUCLEAR ARMS ISSUE

It is essential that we continue to talk and discuss and make known our views on this great issue, whether we hold radical or conservative opinions or are perhaps like most of us plainly bewildered.

As yet I am not convinced of the wisdom of unilateral disarmament. Ron asks in his article about living and witnessing under Communism. Perhaps we could do so if Communism were the ideology likely to oppress us — but it is more probable that should this country be occupied by a foreign power the rule would be by Russian totalitarianism. Something quite different. I wonder if the Poles would recommend it to us? I do feel that we should consider this point carefully; is life worth living under any conditions? If the answer is Yes, then clearly defence is not a major consideration of this time. But if the answer is No then equally obviously values or standards must be defended.

More and more it seems the horrors of nuclear war are almost matched

by weapons of so-called conventional forces, particularly if chemical and biological weapons are counted. Is it realistic to believe that if we abandoned nuclear weapons unilaterally, but retained conventional forces, that an aggressor would not attack us? In the last war Japan had no atomic weapons but was so bombed because her resistance was such that unacceptable levels of casualties would occur within the U.S. and Commonwealth armies as they sought to subdue the Japanese. The concern was for the invading troops then and it almost certainly would be again if Britain sought to vigorously defend itself.

And nuclear weapons would be used against us.

The appalling balance of terror has worked so far. But why is it that after all these years agreement between Governments to scale down and eliminate this unnecessary terror from our lives has not been reached? Everyone would gain by it. The colossal sums of money now being spent on Trident by our Government are mirrored by Russia, France, U.S.A. and to a lesser extent by other European countries. We see all around us many more constructive uses for this money, and in the Third World lies the greatest indictment of our failure to live more peaceably with our neighbour, and so we squander fortunes on arms when peace would improve the lot of so many of our brothers and sisters.

I would hope that all of us, however we feel about multilateral or unilateral disarmament, will pray earnestly for the leaders of the nations to seek the ways of peace and trust and co-operation.

Alan Taylor

DONATIONS TO CHARITIES

At its December meeting the P.C.C. finalised its list of donations, and these amounts are indicated below and in due course will be on the notice board in Church. All have been paid with the exception of the donation to the Tanzanian Hospital,* as we are contacting Gideon Mhatmagama, the Administrator, to arrange to transfer the money, either as funds or to make suitable purchases here for him and send them to him.

Approximately half our giving is for the work at home and half for overseas. Generally we try to support those who depend upon Christians primarily for help rather than the population in general and also where we have as a parish some connection.

An additional payment from the uncommitted funds has been made to the Additional Curates Society, of £50.00.

It is of course open to all church members to suggest good causes that the P.C.C. should consider making donations to and indeed the P.C.C. would welcome any comments or suggestions regarding the distribution of our giving and how much it might be.

Alan Taylor (Chairman, Charities Committee)

<i>Charity</i>	£	<i>Charity</i>	£
Church Army — General	100	Elmbridge Hospice	100
Church Army — Audrey Shilling	250	Spitalfields Crypt	125
SPCK	200 ¹	St. Catherine's College (Lesotho)	150
Church Missionary Society	200 ²	Welcare Assessment	392
Bishop Wand School	100	Tanzanian Hospital	275 ³
Cranmer Kalinder School Uganda	100	Uncommitted Funds	258 ⁴
	TOTAL		£2,250

- 1 For Feed the Minds - particularly Sri Lanka
- 2 50% to be earmarked for Nepal.
- 3 We recommend an ongoing commitment to give at least £200 per annum for 5 years from 1983 to 1987.
- 4 As in 1982, we recommend leaving a proportion of funds uncommitted to meet opportunities as they arise during the year.

ADDITIONAL CURATES SOCIETY

I am grateful to all those who have supported this very good home mission society during the past 26 years during which I have been Hon. Secretary of St. James's Branch. This past year a cheque for £72.40 was sent as our contribution; this was made up of donations, and subscriptions (these included three covenants) and a generous amount from the P.C.C. The need for more financial assistance is always great £80,000 will be needed to pay out half yearly grants to curates during this half year.

I received a letter from the secretary Rev. A.J. Prescott recently from which I quote: "*Good News*. After quite a few years we are obliged to increase the cost of this magazine. The magazine will be published twice a year (not three times as at present) and each copy will cost 20p (10p at the moment) i.e. 40p each year for two copies. We propose to publish in time for June 29th and December 25th — Petertide and Christmas. Obviously we regret this increase in price but rising costs, especially the postage, makes this change necessary".

London Festival. The Annual Festival service and meeting takes place on Wednesday June 6th at St. Alban's Holborn at 11.30 a.m.

Vera Rockliffe

THIRD HAMPTON HILL SCOUT GROUP

On 27th January the Group held a President's Evening when, in recognition of 34 years connection with the Group, Mr. S.R. Childs was appointed Life President of the Group. After an opening prayer by the Vicar, the Rev. Nicholas Chubb, the District Commissioner, Mr. John Donaldson, presented him with a framed Life Presidency Certificate, whilst Mrs. Doris Childs was presented with a flower arrangement in Group colours of green and yellow. Mrs. Dorothy Casey received a similar floral gift.

Stan Childs was Cub Scout Leader for 13 years, until on the retirement of the late George Casey he became Group Scout Leader until 1975, when his son Michael succeeded him. Stan then joined the Group Executive Committee until resigning last year.

He helped at jumble sales and firework parties; deputised for Father Christmas at Group bazaars; ran Bingo sessions with very little help; and many other jobs when no-one else was available. Scouting is not just appearing in uniform once or twice a week.

Following the ceremony, Gold and Brown Packs and the Troop entertained parents, past and present, with games and campfire songs, which finished with a touching prayer song "Kum ba yah my Lord".

Light refreshments served by the Executive Committee completed a very pleasant and memorable evening.

Mollie Saunders

CONGRATULATIONS to Greg Martin who received his Warrant as Scout Master on 16th December last. Also to Peter Horner of Gold Pack who was presented with an award from "Friends of the Earth" for a picture of birds he had taken. This took place at the Cubs Christmas party.

LEADER WANTED A Leader is urgently needed for Youth work with the 15 - 20 year age range for the Venture Scout Unit. The Group has been sponsored by St. James's for 35 years and a Leader with or without Scouting Experience is needed to help with this very worthwhile project. The Unit takes boys and girls from 15 - 20 years and the Leader can be male or female. If you are interested please contact me (977-5041) or the Rev. Nicholas Chubb at The Vicarage.

Michael J. Childs, G.S.L.

IMPRESSIONS OF A SPECIAL PARTY

As we arrived at Westminster Cathedral Hall on a cold day in January there was a line of men waiting patiently to come in to the sisters and co-workers of Mother Teresa's dinner for London's homeless.

The tables were gay and so was the hall which was a hive of activity. On the stage a large beautiful crib, the centre of tall Christmas trees with fairy lights and stacks of presents in see-through bags.

The helpers were ready early and the men and women were welcomed individually by sisters and co-workers and given presents and bags of goodies.

Then the organization of dinners while the band played. Plates were passed from hand to hand by long chains of co-workers so that each guest received their turkey dinner hot. It was quite amazing to see nearly 500 dinners and Christmas puddings served from gas rings and heat trays in so short a time.

Our guests came from all walks of life — even fishermen from the North Sea whose jobs had disappeared. Many had tales to tell with a grin and a hope for to-morrow although many would be sleeping out that night.

Cardinal Basil Hume, a familiar figure at these parties in his black cassock, came in to have a word with each person. There was singing and laughter and endless cups of tea and then, as always, the well-known carols sung by guests and helpers as the sisters stood round the crib. It was a night for sharing, a night to be remembered.

May French

CHRISTIAN PEACE CAMP

Once again there will be a Christian Peace Camp over Easter which will begin with a visit to various military bases. It will start with a visit to the USAF base at Greenham Common and finish at Lakenheath in Suffolk. There will be an all-night vigil on Holy Saturday and a dawn Eucharist on Easter Day. We are asked to pray for Anne Malins and all the other campers planning this piece of witness. Further details and information can be obtained from Anne on 941 6784.

RE-MARRIAGE OF DIVORCED PEOPLE IN CHURCH

As most of you who read this will know, shortly after the last issue of the Spire went to press the House of Bishops responded to the votes of the Dioceses as to whether or not to implement 'Option G'. In the event they had little choice except to reject it because there was an overwhelming vote against the proposal in the country as a whole. Certainly the Diocese of London clergy left no doubt in anyone's mind that the scheme was quite unworkable. The next step is up to the General Synod. The sort of problems that can occur was highlighted by the case of the unfortunate couple in Nottingham who were first refused and then, after much publicity, given permission to marry in a Roman Catholic Church. If 'Option G' had been accepted it would not have been long before some such incident would have occurred and the church as a whole would have been discredited as well as people hurt. We are better taking time to find the right solution than rush into an unsatisfactory expedient.

P.C.C.

The Parochial Church meeting on 24th January dealt mostly with loose ends, many of which took some time to unravel. Among the principal items were the CARPET for the extended floor; many of you will have seen that the choice made was a rust which complements the tiles and blends well with the markings in the pulpit. The SPIRE was debated at considerable length; the cost is fairly easy to assess but it is less easy to find out how 'effective' it is. The outcome was that we are to continue to have the Spire in its present form for at least one more year. (Since the meeting we have heard that the printer will not have to charge us any more for printing which is good news and for which we are duly grateful). The date of the **Annual Parochial Church Meeting** was fixed for 10th April at 8.00 p.m. in the **Church**. (More about this below). The date for our celebration of **St. James's Day** was fixed for Sunday 22nd July. The arrangements for **Lent, Holy Week and Easter** were finalised.

THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The date for this has been fixed for 10th April in the Church at 8.00 pm. The rules state that the meeting must be held by the end of April and with Easter itself not being until 22nd April we had to arrange for it not to clash with Holy Week. So this year it is early. We shall have the same opportunities as in previous years to hear reports of all the activities and doings of the Parish, including of course the financial position. We shall hear something of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. We shall elect Churchwardens and members of the P.C.C. In connection with this we shall completely renew the **Electoral Roll**. Already some people have taken forms and filled them in. The list must be complete by 27th March, that is fourteen days before the Annual Meeting. No names can be accepted then before 10th April. Do come and attend. We shall be able to use our new speaker system so that everyone can be heard!

LENT

A few special arrangements for Lent (details for Holy Week and Easter will be in the April edition of the Spire). The Good News Group will meet weekly (instead of fortnightly) at 75, Burton's Road, and will discuss **Faith** in various situations. Details from Don Rawlins. Koinonia continues to meet in the vestry on Thursdays. Both groups start at 8.00pm. On Friday mornings there will be an additional service of Holy Communion at 6.30am.

AN ALPHABET OF BIBLE PROMISES

- A** Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. (Matt. 7 v.7)
- B** Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. (Acts 16 v.31)
- C** Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief. (1 Tim. 1 v.15)
- D** Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom (Job 33 v.24)
- E** Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven that one of these little ones should perish. (Matt. 18 v.14)
- F** For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him hath everlasting life. (John 3 v.16)
- G** God commendeth His love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. (Romans 5 v.8)
- H** He that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me hath everlasting life. (John 5 v.24)
- I** I am the good shepherd. (John 10 v.14)
- J** Jesus Christ the same yesterday to-day and for ever. (Hebrews 13 v.8)
- K** Keep thy tongue from evil and thy lips from speaking guile. (Psalm 34 v.13)
- L** Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. (John 14 v.1)

This alphabet has been supplied by Violet Clarke who writes: "I learnt all these texts when I was 9 years old (actually it amounted to 100). I have made some into an alphabet and during illness or fear I have been able to recall the promises of God and to find much comfort. Take the Helmet of Salvation and the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God".

The remainder of the alphabet will appear next month.

AROUND THE SPIRE

We extend our sympathy to Sylvia and Peggy Boarder on the death, recently, of their sister Millicent. As you may know, Millicent was the wife of Bishop Alan Rogers who was Vicar of St. Mary's Twickenham for several years and latterly had been Bishop of Mauritius.

Both the Rev. and Mrs. Rogers often worshipped at St. James's when they were down staying with Sylvia and Peggy since their retirement to Blakesley and so we had come to know them and to realise how much Millicent will be missed by her family.

Another much loved member of our congregation has also suffered a sudden and grievous loss, Pat Young's husband, George, died on February 10th. Again, we all send our love to Pat, Lesley and Robert and we hope they know that we are thinking of them and praying that they will be comforted.

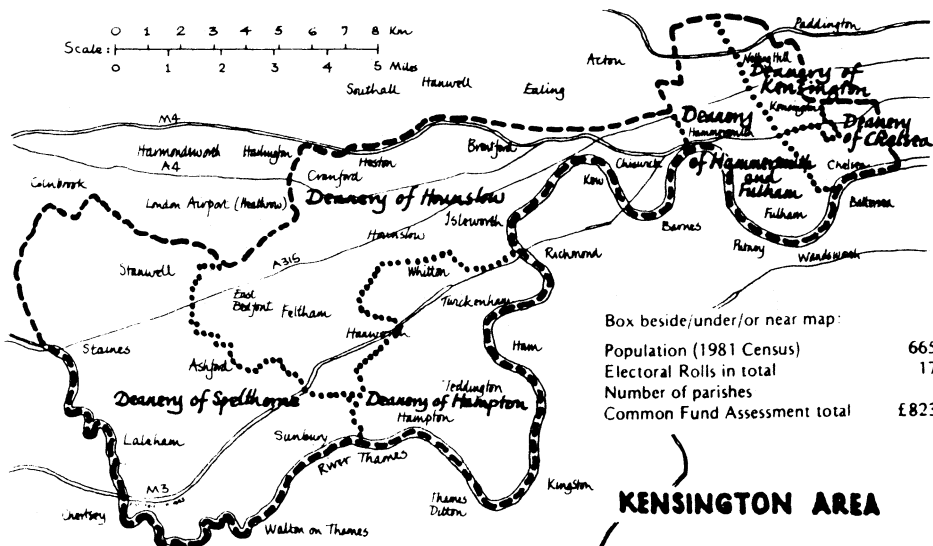
A recent note from all the Harries family thanks everyone who has written on the death of Tom and for all the kindness shown to Greta, Richard and Raymond.

THE LONDON DIOCESAN FAMILY

The organisation of the Church can be very confusing and so we thought it might help some (especially those who are new to the district or fairly recently confirmed) if we reproduced the map published in the first edition of the Kensington Herald to show where we fit into the overall picture of the Church.

Hampton Hill is in the Diocese of LONDON and the Bishop's name is Graham Leonard. The Diocese is divided into five areas and Ours is KENSINGTON. The Bishop is Mark Santer. The Area has an Archdeacon to help with administration. His name is Timothy Raphael. Within the Archdeaconry of Middlesex we are in the DEANERY of Hampton and the Area Dean is Robin Rogers (Vicar of St. Mary's, Hampton).

All the Areas are shaped like portions of Camembert Cheese, thin at one end and wide at the other. The Diocese of London lies north of the Thames. Everything south is in the Diocese of Southwark. (So Kingston and Richmond have no direct church links).



FROM THE REGISTERS

Marriage	18 Feb.	John Henry Cubbon and Frances Elizabeth Draughn		
Funerals	25 Jan.	Rose Mary Atten	Laurel Dene	aged 81
	26 Jan.	Ivy Austin	7 Holly Road	aged 83
	27 Jan.	Charles Arthur Foster	11 Wolsey Road	aged 71
	2 Feb.	Janet Rosemary Ethel Newman	21 Sanders Close	aged 48
	15 Feb.	Charles George Young	90 Ormond Ave.	aged 64
	17 Feb.	Ivy Winifred Youngs	6 Roy House	aged 86

DATES TO NOTE

March

13	09.30	Holy Communion	
14	20.00	Good News Group, 75 Burton's Road	
15	10.30	Young Families Group, Toddlers Club, Wayside	
	19.15	Holy Communion	
	20.00	Koinonia	
16	18.30	Confirmation Class, Wayside	
18	LENT 2	Services as usual	
20	09.30	Holy Communion	
	20.00	Tuesday Club, Mr. D. Simpson "Twickenham Past & Present"	
21	20.00	Good News Group, 75 Burton's Road	[Wayside]
22	10.30	Young Families Group, 'Bashing & Blowing Session'	
	19.15	Holy Communion	
	20.00	Koinonia	
23	06.30	Holy Communion	
	18.30	Confirmation Class	
24	ANNUNCIATION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (from 25th)		
25	LENT 3	BRITISH SUMMER TIME BEGINS	Services as usual
27	09.30	Holy Communion	
	20.15	Properties Committee, 40 Cardinal's Walk	
28	20.00	Good News Group, 75 Burton's Road	
29	10.30	Pram Service followed by Coffee and Simnel Cake for	
	19.15	Holy Communion	[Mothering Sunday]
	20.00	Koinonia	
30	06.30	Holy Communion	
	18.30	Confirmation Class	

April

1	LENT 4	MOTHERING SUNDAY	Services as usual
3	09.30	Holy Communion	
	20.00	Tuesday Club	
4	14.30	Mothers' Union – Mrs. Scrutton 'Luther'	
	20.00	Hampton Council of Churches, St. Mary's	
	20.00	Good News Group, 75 Burton's Road	
5	10.30	Young Families Group, Helen Webster on decorating	
	19.15	Holy Communion	[Easter Eggs]
	20.00	Koinonia	
6	06.30	Holy Communion	
	18.30	Confirmation Class	
8	LENT 5	Services as usual	
10	20.00	Annual Parochial Church Meeting – in Church	