

Last month I wrote about paradox - the putting together of opposites to make a special effect. Christmas is a bit like that. On the purely physical, practical level we have got used to the idea, sadly, of amazing contrasts in daily life. On the one hand we have the incredible richness, overall, of what we spend and do at Christmas - the food, the presents and so on. On the other hand we see, if we choose to, the have-nots of our society, those who have no homes, no friends, no food, no presents; we take it all massively for granted. We may also be jolted too into an awareness of the hungry and oppressed further afield, through-out the world.

**"There is not enough darkness in all the world to put out the light of one small candle."**



The meaning of Christmas is brought to our minds by the other set of contrasts - human and divine. For at Christmas we see God and man coming together in an unique way. The Creator linking himself to the created. It is a great puzzle, a problem, a thing which on the surface is meaningless, nonsensical. And yet, if we look at it more slowly we see revealed an incredible truth. God so loved the world that he came among us in order to save us from ourselves, in order that we could become aware of his great love for us. He does not only love some, rich, poor, black, white, eastern, western, old, young or however we choose to divide up our world. He loves us all.

Is that not cause for celebration? No wonder we give the festival everything we possess to make it memorable, joyous, happy, fun. But do we reflect God's love in how we act out our faith afterwards? For most of us that is the problem.

*Nicholas Chubb*

## CONFIRMATION

We have just heard that the Bishop of Kensington has agreed to hold a Confirmation for the Hampton Deanery in St. James on 16th June 1987 at 8.00 pm. This is a Tuesday. Naturally we would hope to have some candidates of our own when playing host to the surrounding parishes. We already have some names of interested people. During December a list will be put in church on which those considering Confirmation will be invited to put their names. Shortly after Christmas we shall discuss together when and where to meet. There is no obligation at this stage. There is no prejudged age although the expectation will be that the will for Confirmation will be within the candidates themselves and will not be wished upon them by others who think it might 'be good for them'. We have recently had a steady flow of adults who have been confirmed at neighbouring churches. It would be good if we have some from within our own number of those who have recently found a Faith or who have noticed a renewal of a search within themselves. More about this in January's Magazine.

## JESUS AND THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS (cont'd)

If AIDS is to be regarded as "Divine Judgement" then so must many other diseases - perhaps all other diseases. (I wonder if Jesus ever had a cold?) My knowledge is really only of cancer, but in that field I can find "judgements" for promiscuity in women, celibacy in women, lack of circumcision (there's a lot of good advice in Leviticus), smoking, drinking alcohol, self-neglect, enjoying (or working in) the sun and open air, being Oriental, working in particular environments, eating too little roughage, being of Western civilisation, eating an African style diet, swimming in African rivers, eating curry ..... and more. Some diseases can be attributed to communal sin, e.g. that which engenders pollution in many forms.

Many AIDS sufferers contract a variety of cancer and, consequently, I see a number of those young men. With the certainty that they will be dead within two years and the concern about sexual partners whom they may love suffering the same fate, they have enough fear and loneliness without unreasoned ostracism. For most such men of my acquaintance, the relief of being treated like a normal human being, with care and affection, is overwhelming. I wonder what the Christian Church - e.g. the congregation of St. James's Church can do about that.

There has been much information dispersed on the subject of AIDS and its transference. The official leaflets and notices, e.g. in the national press, accord with what I see and hear from my work colleagues. Anyone who doesn't believe or understand these will not be convinced by anything I can say. Bearing in mind that AIDS has been around for a number of years, despite the long incubation period, it is likely that all the means of infection have become apparent. I believe there is one case whose origins cannot be traced. All others have been contracted by intimate sexual contact, blood transfusion or use of hypodermic needle previously used by an AIDS victim, or congenitally. It is true that AIDS evidence has been found in saliva etc., but infection from those sources is unknown. Many AIDS sufferers have, for many years before and during their disease, lived and worked closely with other people, none of whom have contracted the disease.

The least we can and must do is pray for AIDS sufferers, their families and loved ones and the people who are so afraid that they are blind to common sense and reason.

Whether or not the Seven Deadly Sins are outdated, Jesus' version of the commandments must rule the Christian's attitude to God, Christianity and all our moral and immoral neighbours whom we have to love as well as ourselves.

*Ruth Mills*

## H.H.A. ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION

Each year this gets larger and more varied and increasingly well attended. It is always good to welcome back those who have become regular exhibitors and we have paid tribute to them in the past and their names are recorded in the programme. New skills this year included Glass Engraving, Pyrography - a modern form of poker work, Mexican Leather Carving, Pottery Dolls House Furniture and Ceramic models of animals; Wood Carving produced two new exhibitors in Joyce and Len Doughty and Frank Harper - familiar friends wearing

new hats! This year saw the introduction of Moving Sand pictures, the making of Silver Jewellery, Stained Glass Work and beautifully painted models of Tolkien phantasies.

As usual space does not permit me to mention everyone but for me the highlights of the afternoon were Edith Littlewood's magnificent quilt in many coloured 'Cathedral Window' patchwork, Miss J. Bradley's exquisite silk embroidered bedhead, Dick Waltham's Map of Hampton Hill, Doreen Wilcock's acrylic painting of Painshill Common executed during the afternoon as was Maurice Franco's excellent portrait in oils of Jesse Wright. I also pay special tribute to the splendid heirloom spinning wheel of skilful wood carver Mr Peto, especially as it was fashioned out of seasoned lilac, holly and oak from his garden.

Throughout the exhibition we were treated to piano and flute music by Penelope Hawker, Sophie de Verteuil and Abigail Oprey. In all the exhibition covered a remarkable field of local talent - painting and sketching, photography, knitting, crochet, tapestry, indeed needlework of all kinds, pressed flower work, the making of corn dollies, pottery, spinning and weaving, marquetry, sculpture, general handicrafts, model boats, a working model railway, a display by local members of the R.S.P.B., calligraphy, flower arranging, a display of the Association's Archives and the little book of its history. There was also an opportunity for joining the Association of which several people availed themselves. Are YOU a member yet?

It was all fascinating - no wonder Toby Jessel stayed such a long time and the Surrey Comet report waxed enthusiastic. Congratulations and thanks to all concerned especially to Joyce Doughty who, mercifully says she really enjoys organising it.

### VISIT TO HIGHGATE CEMETERY

*Margery Orton*

Recently the Social Committee arranged a visit to Highgate Cemetery. If one is right in describing the function of the Social Committee as providing entertainment for the Parish, one might find a visit to a cemetery rather surprising. But I gathered that besides Karl Marx quite a few distinguished and well-known people were buried there and I trusted the powers that be and looked forward to a worthwhile expedition when we set off at about 12 noon in a number of private cars. And my trust was very well rewarded because the cemetery turned out to be not exactly entertaining (although the very capable young guide who led us round told us some truly entertaining anecdotes about certain graves), but a most memorable place full of beauty, interest and a strange fascination.

The cemetery covers 37 acres and holds 51,000 graves with 166,000 people. It was opened in 1839 as one of seven privately owned, commercially operated cemeteries around the perimeter of London. The rapidly increasing population had rendered the traditional burial grounds within the metropolis overcrowded and unhygienic. It consists of two distinct parts, separated by a road - Karl Marx very appropriately lies in the Eastern half. That section is newer and despite countless famous inmates not fractionally as exciting as the Western part. Here also lie buried very many well-known people, but its main attraction to me was of a different nature. This section is situated just below St. Michael's church whose spire on the high point of Highgate Hill is widely

visible, and we were told that at the time of its opening the entire cemetery commanded splendid views across the whole of London. You can hardly imagine that now, because the hilly terrain is completely overgrown with imposing high trees and a dense undergrowth of yew and ivy, the latter growing both horizontally and vertically and developed from small ornamental varieties. As the excellent literature provided by the Friends of Highgate Cemetery tells us, ivy symbolises remembrance, and yew sorrow. The cemetery is full of symbolism: upturned torches on the heavy iron doors of the catacombs in the Egyptian Avenue and the Lebanon Circle for instance are symbols of death. These fascinating architectural features are an added attraction in this unique garden of "Victorian gloom". As the guidebook points out, Gothic melancholy was probably intended by the creators of this cemetery, but it has only been achieved by time and neglect. Originally the monumental mausoleums and individual graves were set in acres of immaculately mown grass. I am glad of this change: the jungle-like chaos where dark green abundance has swallowed up every manmade feature might be regrettable in many ways; it not only obscures but actually destroys endless details of great artistic or historic interest; but it is also supremely beautiful. It might not appeal to everybody, but I found the distinctly eerie, mysterious atmosphere with its contrasts of white stone and rich dark ivy truly fascinating.

The Friends of Highgate Cemetery, a vigorous voluntary organisation is doing great work in trying to preserve and restore the best features. They are working to long term plans which include scientifically based and ecologically thought out landscaping projects -and the enthusiasm of the members we encountered was -almost - infectious.

I say almost, because we know all about overgrown churchyards, albeit on a much smaller scale - and even our own tasks seem daunting. And on a deeper level one might ask oneself whether all this effort for a place of death is justified in a world where so much else needs doing for the living. It is strange that quite often monuments of death seem to be the most lasting feature of a particular culture.

I will leave the subject of Highgate Cemetery with these thoughts, but not without thanking the Social Committee for arranging this most stimulating visit. The Victorian creators would doubtless have approved: cemeteries then were seen as having a value in the improvement of morals and taste, and the cultivation of the intellect. Highgate was a showpiece and favoured for weekend promenades. It would certainly warrant a further trip today, to soak up more of the atmosphere and hunt down a few of the most interesting graves. Again, the literature provided is a very good aid in finding the burial places of the dozens of well-known individuals.

*Hilde Bucknell*

## **Garage Sale**

The Garage Sale in aid of Bishop Wand School on 8th November has proved a great success. We raised £80. Taking into account the proceeds from a previous effort we have thus reached our target. A very warm thank you to all those who gave goods and to those who came to buy.

*Helen Taylor and Hilde Bucknell*

## THE PROMISES OF GOD - 7

Jesus tells us not to be anxious but to trust in God and trust in him also. "I am not the source of the words I speak to you, it is the Father who dwells in me doing his work ..... in truth I tell you he who was faith in me will do what I am doing ..... if you ask anything in my name I will do it". If you love me and obey my commands I will ask the Father and he will give you another to be your advocate - the Spirit of Truth". We are told that in the world those who neither see nor know God cannot receive this spirit but that those who do know God will have the spirit to dwell in them. Everyone who obeys God's commands is loved by God and Jesus promises "I will love him and disclose myself to him".

Are we obedient enough, open enough, expectant enough to be aware of how and when Jesus prompts us? Do we set aside enough time to listen to Him? If we are really faithful we have another promise "The Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name will teach you everything and will call to mind all that I have said". Is this promise a living reality to us? Jesus tell us that it can be. If you dwell in me and my words dwell in you, ask what you will and you shall have it. This is my Father's glory that you may bear fruit in plenty and so be my disciples ... you are my witnesses." A sobering thought, perhaps a subject for prayer and meditation. "If I were in court what sort of an advocate should I be for Jesus, what sort of a witness before the world to His reality love and power?"

When we are challenged, if we are in Christ and His Spirit in us, we are told we shall be given not only the words but the power to do deeds and act in His name. We shall be guided into all truth, given faith to ask anything in His name believing as we ask that our prayers are not only heard but answered. Paul tells us that the reason that we don't often seem to get very much is because we do not expect very much inspite of all Jesus's assurances. Jesus assures us "In very truth I tell you, if you ask the Father for anything in my name He will give it to you. So far you have asked for nothing in my name. Ask and you will receive so your joy may be complete".

Jesus even had faith to ask that Lazarus be returned from the grave. At what juncture does our faith fail and Jesus's promises have no power in us?

Dear Lord, we do believe, help our unbelief to be changed into increasing belief, cherish our little mustard seed of faith so that it may grow and bear fruit and come to harvest, to our well being and to your honour and glory. Amen.

*Margery Orton*

## TWO AFRICAN SCHOOLS

The first is in Tanzania and is called the Solomon Malangu School, and it is for South African black children. It has been built and equipped by the African National Congress, and incorporates 2 schools, Primary and Secondary, a creche, and a training school for technical subjects.

The students are the children who in the last few years have been protesting against the inferior education provided for them under the Bantu Education Act in South Africa. These protests have been met by police and army action; starting in

1976, protests have continued ever since. To quote Mary Benson in her book on Nelson Mandela: "During sixteen months, recorded deaths numbered some six hundred but were thought to be nearer a thousand - all but two of them black, and most of them school pupils shot by the police".

Many children fled from South Africa. Numbers arrived in Tanzania and are now attending this school. There has recently been an appeal for books and teaching equipment with a good response.

There is an urgent need for all sorts of domestic, toilet, hygiene, sports equipment for the youngsters, boys and girls. Everything is needed, things are in very short supply in Tanzania, and anyway these exiles don't want to take too many necessities away from the local people. Toilet articles are needed, soap, tooth brushes, tooth paste, underwear, sheets, blankets; parents will know what school children need.

A basket was put in the church on Sunday, October 12th, and will be left there for a time. Please respond to this appeal; everything will be most welcome.

The second school is in Uganda; it is a primary school and Cranmer Kalinda told us about it when he attended the Eucharist at St. James's a few weeks ago.

We have helped this school before by providing money for the roof; this was some years ago. Recently during the civil war the school was shattered by shell fire and several of the children and staff were killed. The school was completely wrecked and the children of the neighbourhood are now being taught under the trees in the school compound.

Money is needed here, and later in the year there will be a special collection. The people of the village built the school themselves from home-made materials, and were proud of it. Now they have got to rebuild.

We hope that a friend of Cranmer's, Mr Nicholas Wright, will visit St. James's in November or December, show us some of his slides of the school and talk about it. I am not certain when he saw the school, when I was in Kampala in 1983 it was too dangerous to visit it; but I am sure what Mr Wright will have to tell us will be interesting.

*Hannah Stanton*

## "PILGRIM"

Our monthly Informal Service has for some time now provided a very welcome opportunity for families with small children to worship in a relaxed atmosphere, and enjoy a service aimed specifically at the younger members of the congregation.

But on Sunday 2nd November the emphasis was different again; the tables were turned and the children themselves took over a large part of the service to aim a message at us, for a change.

Through the medium of a jazz cantata with narrator, singers and musicians, and mime actors for visual impact the children told the story of "Pilgrim", an original interpretation of "The Pilgrim's Progress". This is an ageless story; but it can

surely never have been more relevant than it is now, for Christians struggling to see a clear path in our often violent and materialistic society. The 'Vanity City' scene acted with vitality and enthusiasm by the young cast, was particularly telling; but the childrens' committment throughout was most impressive and the standard of performance very high. The talented singers, musicians and actors certainly got their message across and made of "Pilgrim" a true morality play for our times; a timely reminder in the approach to Christmas of the need to reflect on our priorities and values.

Children and adults alike enjoyed Sunday's performance of "Pilgrim" - it was the very first play my 3 year old son had seen, and he was very intrigued and delighted by it all. I should like to say a big 'Thank you ' to everyone who worked so hard to make "Pilgrim" such a success, and I hope this group of young actors and musicians will contribute to our informal services again in the future.

*Jane Newman*

*(The play was produced by Pam Atkinson and Bridget Fairbairn with children who had been approached through the local schools and youth organisations. The children had originally met in workshops throughout the summer holidays where they explored the themes of this work through artwork and improvised drama. A first rehearsed performance was given at SS Michael and George.) Ed.*

## MOTHERS UNION

At the October meeting of the Mothers Union, Angela Ball came to talk to us on "Welfare". She explained that she worked mainly with the single-parent families in the area and found that poverty and unemployment were leading factors of course. The M.U. holiday scheme was, however, a great help and much appreciated among the young mothers.

The last event in our M.U. year was the Deanery Day on Thursday October 9th, held this year at St. James. Invitations, as usual, were sent to neighbouring M.U.s resulting in a good attendance. The morning service was conducted by Rev. Gordon Wilson, and after a picnic lunch in the church, we had a talk by Sharon Lovell on "Young children in church". Discussion followed in which we could air our views and make suggestions. Altogether it was a very pleasant day, and the meeting was closed with prayers by Mrs Jean Wilson.

## CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

Following last year's very successful experiment with holding the Service at the 9.30 am Informal Service time we shall this year be repeating the process.

So make a date in your diaries for Sunday 4th January 1987 at 9.30 am and come and join in the Christingle Service. For those who are unfamiliar with the custom it is an occasion when we raise money for the Children's Society by means of taking part in a delightful tradition imported from central Europe. More details in the January issue of the Spire which will be published before Christmas. Children and adults take a full part.

## "NOT STRANGERS BUT PILGRIMS" - WHAT NEXT?

On the day of the Big Bang in the City of London, the Canon reported (at All Saints' Church, Hampton). The Canon, Martin Reardon, author of the source book for the 1986 Lent Course "What on Earth is the Church For?" and secretary of the General Synod's Board of Mission and Unity, was bringing us up to date on the long-term ecumenical programme "Not Strangers but Pilgrims" of which this year's course was a part. 65,000 had participated in "The People Next-door" course back in the sixties: this year there had been 65,000 groups involving about a million people.

Although when the plans for this year were being made, some radio stations had initially been reluctant to take part, much interest had actually been shown in the broadcasts which were linked with the course, and many of the radio stations had since been asking what was being planned for 1987. In fact, we were told that, as had always been intended, nothing was being done centrally for next Lent but there was a possibility of something for Lent 1988. In the meantime some radio stations were preparing their own programmes as a follow-up to the 1986 course. More generally, new satellites would soon open up Europe to American-style TV religion, and this would create both problems and possibilities.

As regards the questionnaires which were completed by those who attended this year's course, an analysis of the nationwide survey was now available in a book "Views from the pews". The general picture is that people felt that the church was the body of Christians, past, present and future; that Christ was hidden by jargon; that more emphasis should be placed on evangelism although people found it difficult to express their faith; that they wanted to enjoy the differences between the different denominations but did not really understand the beliefs of those from denominations other than their own; and that it was time for unity, a unity not based on uniformity but on allowing diversity. A strong demand for inter-communion emerged. Another book related to the course is "Reflections" which presents the views of different churches, and a further book "Observations", to be published shortly, contains comments from house-churches and other fringe groups and also some theological dialogues.

Martin Reardon is realistic about the progress towards unity but also optimistic, though it is not so much a united church which he sees on the horizon but the Kingdom of God, of which the church is the forerunner. Not so much a big bang but much, much more than a whimper.

*Ron Bridges*

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During the installation of the superb new internal lighting in Liverpool Cathedral one of the electricians working in the roof space accidentally left the lift door open (reports Canon Ken Riley, the Cathedral Treasurer). Nobody could summon the lift from below.

Imagine the consternation of the visitors, the Canon says, when the Clerk of Works stood in the middle of the Cathedral and yelled heavenwards: "PETER, CLOSE THE GATES!"



## TAIZE: A PILGRIMAGE OF TRUST OF EARTH

A large number of young people from many parts of Europe are to meet in London for prayer and discussion from 29 December to 2 January. The meetings, some of which are to take place simultaneously in Westminster Abbey, Westminster Cathedral and the Methodist Central Hall, have been arranged by the ecumenical Taizé community based in Eastern France which many of the participants will have visited for week-long explorations of the sources of faith. The participants will be staying with families and church communities throughout Greater London and there will be local meetings as well as the full meetings in central London. St. James's is to be the venue for one of these - on the morning of Wednesday 31 December, and it is hoped that our Liturgical Dance Group will join in the worship on that occasion. Do come along to join in fellowship with the visitors from abroad.

There is a possibility that even when you read this, accommodation will still be needed in our area for the visitors: all that is required is the room and the provision of a simple breakfast. If you might be able to help with this or have any other query about the programme, please contact Elizabeth Preston (979-5827) or Ian Walsh (941-4303).

Taizé always encourages involvement in one's local situation and a group meets for prayer each Monday at 7.30 pm at St. Theodore's, Station Road, Hampton. All are welcome.

*Ron Bridges*

The Social Committee has again made arrangements for a Christmas/New Year visit to a top West End musical. The show is **JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOUR DREAMCOAT** at the Royalty Theatre, Kingsway. The date is 2.30 pm Saturday 17th January, 1987. Tickets price £7.50 are now available. It is intended to run a coach from St. James leaving about 1.00 pm. Tickets are limited so book early. Cost of the coach is about £2.00 per person.

*David Lloyd*

At a recent P.C.C. meeting it was remarked that we hadn't been **CAROL SINGING** for a long time. So on Tuesday 23rd December we plan to remedy this oversight. We hope lots of people will come - ability to sing is optional - the more the merrier. We shall meet at Church at 7.30 pm and please be prompt. We shall not be collecting money but just taking the Christmas message into the streets of the Parish. Afterwards we shall come back to Wayside for hot drinks and mince pies. (Any offers for the latter gratefully accepted).

*Paul Revis*

HHA are holding a **NEW YEAR TEA PARTY AND 'ARMCHAIR TRAVEL' TO NEPAL AND PERU** on Saturday, January 10th at St. James's Parish Hall, School Road from 3.00 pm (prompt) to 6.00 pm.

Our intrepid walkers, Peggy and Ron Salmons have recently been walking/camping/photographic treks in the mountains of the Himalayas and the Andes. They have some breath-taking slides and fascinating descriptions of their adventures. Admission by ticket only from HHA Membership Secretary, Maureen Loukes, 167 Uxbridge Rd, 941 3951 or Joyce Doughty, 228 Uxbridge Rd, 979 2839.

## FROM THE REGISTERS

### Baptisms

November	9th	Jamie Christopher Bridges	5 Sparrow Close
		Simon James Tournier	1 Mays Road
		Katrina Patrizia Cole	27 Longford Close

### Funerals

November	4th	Gerald Kenyon Rodgers	55 Laurel Road	aged 76
	7th	Harry Nelson Butler	109 Rectory Grove	aged 81
	13th	James Andrew Brown	24 Uxbridge Road	aged 73
	13th	Edith Maude Thomas	Laurel Dene	aged 83

## DATES TO NOTE

December	4	20.00	P.C.C.
	9	20.00	Properties Committee
	10	20.00	Music and Ministry - including Healing
	11	20.00	Liturgical Committee
	16	20.00	Tuesday Club
	31	09.30	Taizè Pilgrims at St. James
Jan. '87	4	09.30	Christingle Service

### Christmas Services

Our Services for this year will take on a similar pattern to those of recent years. As usual there will be a leaflet sponsored by the Hampton Council of Churches which will be delivered into the homes of everyone in the parish and which will include details of the services in all the local churches.

However here is a list of what we have planned for ourselves:

Tuesday	16th December	7.30 pm	Rectory School Carol Service
Wednesday	17th December	7.30 pm	Lady Eleanor Holles School Carol Service
Sunday	21st December	6.30 pm	Service of Lessons and Carols
Tuesday	23rd December	7.30 pm	Carol Singing round the Parish
Christmas Eve		4.00 pm	Carols at the Crib for children and parents
		<u>11.45 pm</u>	Midnight Eucharist

Christmas Day	8.00 am	Holy Communion
	9.30 am	Parish Communion

26th December (St. Stephen's Day) 10.00 am Holy Communion

27th December (St. John's Day) 10.00 am Holy Communion

28th December (Sunday after Christmas) Morning Services as usual  
Evening Service - Evensong with Carols

Church Cleaning Many thanks to those who have responded to a call to help clean the Church. We now have three more volunteers. Any more helpers would be just as eagerly welcomed!