

For many people May is the month when Christian Aid hits the headlines. Last year £17,000,000 was raised to help the needy in various parts of the world. Who are the needy? This year the slogan is: 'More power to the poor'. And it is easy to equate the needy with the poor and to think that the poor only means those without enough money. Recently I read what I consider to be a much more realistic definition of what it is to be poor. Leonardo Boff writes "the poor are defined in terms of relationship, because there are no rich or poor in themselves. In an economic sense poor is in opposition to rich; in a political sense poor is opposed to powerful; in a hygienic sense poor is distinct from healthy; in a cultural sense, the poor are illiterate as opposed to educated; and so on". And he then goes on to point out that until the fourth century the church was made up largely of the poor. Many of Jesus' sayings are about the poor and St. Paul points out that few are mighty or powerful. We in the West and also in England have become used to the mainstream of Christians being interlocked with the power struggles of the rich and politically powerful. We have been used to 'exporting' our Faith as if it were something that is a necessary ingredient for healthy living. And in many ways we have grown increasingly further and further away from the poor. At various times the Church of England has made valiant efforts to engage with the poor as in Victorian times with the building of so many churches (our own St. James being amongst them) in down-at-heel communities. (Do you remember the splendid phrase of the Bishop of London when he visited St. James for its consecration? "A barn of a church in a wilderness of a parish"). We are in our time, it seems to me, becoming more and more dismissive of the poor, blaming them for their own plight. We blame those who start in poverty through no fault of their own and who by definition are so starved of normal relationships that they have no hope of leading a 'normal' life.

Many of our political policies are leading us in the direction of becoming ever more dismissive of the 'poor'. Christian Socialism is not to be equated with encouraging the feckless to be even more feckless; still less is it to be equated with supporting violence amongst the desperate who feel this is the only solution to their problems. (Yet this is the caricature often painted.) It is to do with standing alongside the poor as widely defined at the beginning of this article. And that surely is an admirable aim. How would we feel if we were the disadvantaged?

Perhaps Christian Aid Week will help us to think more deeply about the whole concept of the poor. Can we take into focus not only those who live in 'Third World' as we have come to understand that phrase but also those amongst whom we live in this country? Jesus is reported in three of the Gospels to have reminded his disciples that you have 'the poor always with you'. Perhaps he meant us to do something about it!

If we feel that we ourselves are powerless to change the situation let us remember the Festival of Pentecost (Whitsunday). The disciples felt utterly powerless after Jesus had physically left them until they became aware of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Then that small band changed the direction of the world - 'turned it upside down' in the words of the Acts of the Apostles. How about that as a vision for us? We are probably afraid of the consequences. Pentecost is on 7th June. All Christians ought to make the day a priority and

seek the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Beware of the possibilities if the Holy Spirit takes over your life.

Nicholas Chubb

IF ONLY I could relate to the people I am related to!

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

About 60 people met in the Parish Hall on 2nd April to conduct the business of the Annual Vestry to elect the Churchwardens for the ensuing year and to hear reports from the various officers of the P.C.C. and to elect new members to the P.C.C. at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. The new Churchwardens elected were Eila Severn and Lesley Mortimer and we wish them well during their year of office.

The Vicar in his report thanked Ron Bridges for his contributions during the last five years and Eila for her help and advice. And in particular he wished Ron well and hoped his health would continue to improve. The Vicar also thanked Margaret Leatherdale for her special secretarial skills over the years and said how special this was since she did not even like typing! When it came to the presentation of the accounts it was also the turn of Hal Severn to receive thanks for the service he has given over the past 20 years or more. Once again the financial matters were clearly presented even if the picture was not one that we should choose to look at!

Then we had the elections to the Deanery Synod and to the P.C.C. and reports on the fabric of the church (a bit depressing since we had lost a stone cross in the recent gales and we are plainly in for some considerable bills in the near future). A short account of our Stewardship Scheme, both what we are already achieving and what is in the pipeline.

And so home to bed before ten o'clock.

The elected members of the P.C.C. are: Mesdames H. Bucknell, A. Davis, M. Gow, M. Heaford, M. Leatherdale, R. Meyerowitz, M. Nevill and M. Smith (staying on from last year) and O. Hayward, R. Mills and H. Taylor elected this year, Messrs. T. Baldwin (staying on from last year) and J. Gostling, D. Lloyd, R. Metcalfe, P. Revis, P. Roberts, P. Rowett and D. Taylor elected this year.

THE CARDINAL AT ST. THEODORE'S

The newly built Roman Catholic Church in Station Road, Hampton, dedicated to St. Theodore, was full to overflowing when Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, came to consecrate it on 22nd March. Representatives of the other christian churches in Hampton had been invited as well as our M.P. and his wife and the Deputy Mayor of the Borough (representing the Queen we were reminded).

The Church is simple in construction, built like a tent the architect told us, light and airy. The Cardinal explained that the church was to be used for prayer (not locked up if possible) and drew our attention to the wealth of good modern sculpture in wood which we could see around us. St. Theodore was one of the

great Archbishops of Canterbury sent by Pope Gregory to organise the Church in England. He was in his sixties when he came and achieved much. The symbolism of the Mass was direct and impressive, cleansing with fire, anointing with oil, filling with the Light of Christ.

A simple moving friendly occasion, we congratulate our fellow christians on their achievement and rejoice with them. Two points for St. James's: 1) If our seats were as comfortable as theirs people would never want to leave the church and 2) the congregation managed to have a thoroughly happy social occasion after the service without a cup of coffee or biscuit or glass of orange squash in sight!

MARCH 6th, 1987 (Centenary)

A World Day of Prayer for Peace and Unity has always seemed a great idea to me. So many women using the same service prepared for the day must surely stir the thought waves around the globe. In the past the Women's World Day of Prayer has been prepared by one country at a time, each taking a turn. This year it was a universal preparation, and the church for the afternoon service was the United Reformed Church in the High Street, Hampton Hill.

As I entered the lovely crowded little church I felt a stranger but the smiling faces that welcomed us soon altered that. Looking around for two empty seats I espied a gap and was delighted to find that the rest of the long pew was occupied by women from St. James's.

It was, as usual, a lovely sincere service of hymns, readings, prayers, meditation, confession and intercession, and then the Leader announced each "Voice" and the country for which she spoke, standing up in her place in the congregation. We covered quite a bit of our world, the Pacific, Asia, Middle East, Africa, Europe, the Carribean, Latin America and North America. After this we had an interesting address by Angela Walton who had been in charge of Esher Hospice and she told us something of the care of the terminally ill patients.

After the service we went through a door into the meeting room, newly repaired and decorated. There we had a welcome cup of tea and met many friends and friendly strangers.

Alison Thompson

MOTHERING SUNDAY, 29th March 1987

Mothering Sunday this year was quite a special one for me. It was indeed a refreshment day, as this Sunday half way through the sacrifices of Lent is also called. After my absence because of illness coming back to a loving family was so good.

Some of the young mums were given a blessing to go out and visit families after baptisms to welcome them into the church, and Nicholas likened this to Jesus commissioning the 72 disciples.

Hannah's sermon was very good and her theme was the three families: the

deprived family as in Africa, our own families, and the wider family of the Church. This last clause really touched me when I thought about our own church of St. James and how kind "my brothers and sisters are to me". May I here thank Pam and Trevor Atkinson for opening their home to me in my hour of need.

Daffodils were given to children to give to their mums. Lisa Atkinson from Sunday School kindly gave hers to me. So I went back home to Pam's with a feeling of love, warmth and joy, knowing that I got it from my family of St. James.

Violet Clark

GRAND CHURCHYARD CLEARANCE

Some time ago we were approached by the Old Hamptonian's RFC regarding a sponsored churchyard attack. Each year the Old Hamptonians have a day allocated to fund raising and this year the proceeds were to be given to the Ashford Hospital Ultrasound Appeal. We were very pleased to accept their offer and the date fixed was Sunday 29 March.

Work started at 9am and the main object was to cut down the overgrown hedge bordering the vicarage garden and clear a large number of tree roots and saplings in the new part of the churchyard. Hitherto, it had not been possible to penetrate this area with our strimmers. Jack was also able to deploy a small team of stalwarts to dig an enormous hole to be used as a soakaway for the new drainage system to be laid down shortly. As an added bonus the soil from the hole was used to fill numerous holes in graves and level up some very uneven ground. Fortunately the wind was blowing in the right direction and we were able to burn up all the debris.

The weather was extremely kind so that the lads were able to drink morning coffee, eat their lunch and drink beer in the sun.

At 3pm work was halted, the big hole was boarded up and the team proceeded to their match against the Ashford nurses at the Old Hamptonians ground.

A sum of approximately £800 was raised by the sponsored work (not walk!) and donations from the church. Altogether a grand total of £2000 was raised by the day's events.

On behalf of St. James's Church I should like to thank the Old Hamptonians for their great effort. Needless to add, we are delighted to have this work done and to have accomplished so much in a single day. It was very heartening to work with a band of young people who worked all day with great enthusiasm not only to do a good turn but at the same time raise money for others.

David Nunn

WHAT IS A DEACON?

We are all praying with love for the future ministry of our newly ordained deacons - Frances Foster, Kitty Platt, Dorothy Bellamy. At their ordination the Bishop of London criticised the modern Western view of the diaconate as "a grave distortion of the role of deacon as exercised in the Early Church".

By the end of the first century a three-fold ministry of bishops, priests and deacons was clearly established. Following a Jewish collegiate tradition the office of bishop or overseer became defined as the president of councils of elders, presbyters or priests. In the Epistles of Clement of Rome and Ignatius of Antioch, deacons are mentioned together with bishops and priests, always in third place. The office was held for life, and included a liturgical and teaching role, reading lessons, assisting at the Holy Communion, leading the laity in prayer and preparing them for Baptism and Holy Communion. His principal tasks, including visiting the sick and poor and distributing alms, were practical and pastoral, reflected today in the fact that the Archdeacon is the Bishop's principal administrative officer. Women such as Lydia and Phoebe played an important role in the Early Church, and the office of deaconess was clearly defined by the fourth century, when the Council of Chalcedon reduced the age of entry to the diaconate for women from 50 to 40!

In the Church of England, no deaconesses were appointed until 1861, five years before the office of Reader was created! Recently six men in a West Country diocese were ordained to the perpetual diaconate.

Whether Frances, Kitty and Dorothy will seek in due course ordination to the priesthood is a matter for them to decide, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Many of us, including those deaconesses who have not chosen to be ordained deacons, hope that the Church of England will restore the diaconate to its historic place, not merely a probation for the priesthood.

Anne Malins

NEWS FROM SOUTHERN AFRICA: or rather lack of news

On March 27th the Richmond and District Anti-Apartheid Group asked the Rev. Brian Brown, Africa Secretary of the British Council of Churches, to come and talk to the Group on "What is really behind the press ban in South Africa".

An outstanding and compelling speaker, Brian very clearly emphasized the acute difficulties of journalists in South Africa today. Under the current Emergency it is virtually impossible to report on the outrageous and violent behaviour of the police and the army in the townships, and to report the killing resulting. Impossible also to comment on the 25,000 men, women and children detained since the emergency started; 40% of whom are below the age of 25, with 4000 minors. The South African Government will only admit to 200 children being detained and being well treated. A recent comment from a reporter for a daily paper in Johannesburg was that he had submitted 154 stories to the Censorship Board, and out of this number his paper was allowed to publish 11.

An American journalist was deported 3 months ago; correspondents for overseas newspapers remember this. They don't want in their turn to risk deportation, and their editors at the home base rely on them for some news even though it be innocuous. The result is that in the press in this country there is not much news of Southern Africa, and the British public is thinking that things are calming down..... "Things are not so bad after all".

The plight of the detained children is shocking. Children are kept in solitary confinement, are tortured, intimidated and in many cases made to inform on friends and neighbours. To illustrate what really is happening to the children

Brian told us the following: a boy of 11 was arrested, beaten up, 4 teeth knocked out; he was made to lie on a form face downwards and was given 80 lashes. One of the policemen urinated in his face. A 5 litre can of petrol was poured over him and he was threatened with being burnt. (I have also heard similar accounts from a Methodist priest visiting from Soweto. HS).

Brian Brown did not only talk about South Africa. He spoke of the tragic situation in Mozambique, where the South African backed guerillas are destroying the country, waging war against the legitimate government, carrying out a scorched earth policy in the countryside and shooting at anything living. People are desperately poor, are eating roots and wearing rags. This is the South African policy of thorough destabilisation of one of their poorer neighbouring countries. Money for Mozambique is going to Oxfam from St. James's Church; it is needed desperately and quickly.

Hannah Stanton

UNDERNEATH THE ARCHES

"London belongs to me" the song goes, not much of it when you sleep on the pavement with your head in one box, your feet in another and in between plastic rubbish bags. Somewhere in this wrapping is a person, we cannot see him, he does not move.

In this "Year of the Homeless" we are seeing many people on TV with nowhere to go. Here they are lying on the street trying to keep warm in cardboard boxes. Here it is real men and women, just like us, part of the family of Christ.

"Blankets" they say as they gather round "you haven't got any pants?". The car is loaded with blankets, socks, scarves, hats and mitts. How welcome they are. "Look after him, he has not got anything". "I am all right but he needs a blanket". "That boy is only sixteen so do what you can for him". I am astonished and humbled at the unselfishness of these people who, having nothing, ask for those who have even less.

Now off to the next place. A garden where in summer lawyers and secretaries chat and eat sandwiches. All is quiet except for our feet crunching across the hard snow. Benches with cardboard "coffins" but no sign of life. A tap on the top of a box "Anybody there?". A husky reply "Yeah". "Do you want a blanket?" The answer is "Please" and a hand comes through a hole in the box and blankets and socks go in. No face can be seen and it is on to the next box or a roll of plastic which in most cases houses a man. Sometimes an empty box rather like an empty house waits for its tenant. We leave blankets for when the owner returns.

A man invites us to meet his mates in their special place. This is a privilege he tells us and the place is a doorway of a large office which for the night is their home, complete with a tray of sausages on sticks given by a friendly hotelier.

Another man, Aberdeen they call him, is sick. We push a cardboard box on his head and lift his feet into another box, wrap him in blankets, with a hat on his

head and a warning to keep wrapped up or he may die of the cold. A muffled "Thanks" comes out, much to the surprise of the others who say he is 65 and a loner.

Is all this really real? It has a feeling of unreality about it, like watching a film that will come to the end. For these people one wonders what the end will be. One man has already been taken to hospital with a frozen leg, and there seems so little hope for tomorrow. Yet there is a sharing and caring and gratitude. A laugh and a joke. "God bless you and thanks for coming" - we hear these words numbers of times, but who is thanking whom? I feel I am receiving so much more than I am giving. A car and a warm bed awaits me. "Lord, give me an understanding heart".

The Baptist, Methodist, Salvation Army, 5 Anglican and 2 RC Churches took part in the blanket collection. On behalf of our friends on the road a heartfelt 'Thank you'.

*Violet Woods
Co-workers of Mother Teresa*

PROMISES - 12

Since I've been writing this series on The Promises I find that the word crops up everywhere, not only in the Bible but in books on Prayer and Healing and The Holy Spirit and several times in the Eucharist and yet for so long it seems no bell has been rung in peoples' minds as to what these Promises are and how much power belief and faith in them carries. "If you can believe nothing is impossible for him that truly believes". "If any of you falls short in wisdom he should ask God for it and it will be given him but he must ask in faith without a doubt in his mind".

"Come closer to God and He will come close to you" and from the O.T. "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength". We must not be unrepentent, complacent, self righteous, spiritually proud. "Humble yourselves before God and He will lift you high". These are PROMISES OF GOD. Remember "Belief comes through hearing and hearing by THE WORD OF GOD".

"Confess your sins and then you will be healed"; a bad conscience and health seldom walk hand in hand; often a turning away from sin (this is what repentance means) is a turning towards health; modern medicine and psychology testifies to this Gospel truth preached so long ago. "The prayer offered in faith will save the sick man, the Lord will raise him from his bed and any sins he may have committed will be forgiven". This promise of bodily healing linked with spiritual healing as a result of believing prayer is once again being justified all over the world as people are preaching the Gospel and healing the sick as Jesus told his disciples to do.

St. Peter tells 'God's scattered people' "Christ Jesus gave us new birth into living hope the inheritance to which we are born is one that nothing can destroy, spoil or wither and you because you put your faith in God are under the protection of His Power". "Fix your hopes (and your belief and expectation) on the gift of grace which is to be yours when Jesus Christ is revealed. The man who has faith will not be put to shame". So many wonderful promises to which we are heirs! If only we had enough faith to believe in them and walk in them and rest in them. But we are not alone, we

can ask for this kind of faith and receive, in the measure in which we ourselves are prepared to give.

It is true that if we do decide to try to walk Christ's way we shall encounter His cross in some shape or form but, in suffering, continuing to "commit our souls to Him our maker will not fail us". He has promised "My Grace is sufficient for you" and we are told "Cast all your cares on Him for you are in His charge" and "the God of all Grace will Himself, after your brief suffering restore, establish and strengthen you on a firm foundation". It is a true promise and worthy to be believed.

Margery Orton

MAGAZINE APPEAL

We thank our readers for their generous donations in response to our February Appeal. We have now received the total sum of £563, which is of great help.

NOSTALGIA

Looking back might be rather self-indulgent and fruitless. But it gives a lot of pleasure and a certain thrill when it delves into the past of an organisation that one feels very intimately involved with. And reflecting on the past can even prove enlightening. However that may be, on the occasion of our Magazine's centenary we will allow ourselves a good look back into the past of St. James's Church.

25 year ago - May 1962 It so happens that this is the first time The Spire carries our present day title page. (Perhaps a hint that it is time for a change?). The magazine is free. The cover is pink and there are five pages of our own text plus an inset. The 15 Church Officers listed are: Vicar: The Rev. R.H. Brunt, Churchwardens: Mr. W.F. Wiggington and Mr. L. Melville, Organist and Choirmaster: Mr. G.D. Butterworth, Secretary P.C.C.: Miss P.M. Stanley, Treasurer: Mr. G.I. Robinson, Recorder of Planned Giving Scheme: Mr. L. Rockliffe, Church Officer for Bookings of Hall and Wayside: Mr. W.F. Wiggington, Supervisors of Wayside: Mr. S. Harris and Mrs. D. Warwick, Magazine Secretary: Mr. C.W. Smith, Organiser for Church Flowers: Mrs. L. Mills, Secretary of Bible Reading Fellowship: Mrs. G.A. Mellor, Deanery Wel-Care Worker: Miss D.M. Kemp.

The Vicar's Notes mention the urgent need for a curate and our sad inability to afford one. - At the M.U. Diocesan Festival in St. Paul's Cathedral the preacher was the Right Revered J.W.C. Wand, the former Bishop of London (after whom our present day C of E Secondary School at Sunbury is named), and Mrs. D. Casey (tel: TED Lock ...) was collecting the names of all who wished to join the coach to St. Paul's - A "Mothers' and Toddlers' Club" formed recently by a member of the Young Wives had been holding regular meetings at "Wayside" on the second and third Wednesday afternoons. - Lesley Young was congratulated on becoming a Patrol Leader of the Guides, whose Lieutenant was Ruth Mills. - And D.W. (who was that? - it is much nicer to have articles signed with the full name) wrote a very amusing article on all that spare time that housewives are supposed to have for voluntary work. (How is any voluntary work ever going to be done nowadays, with all those 'working mothers'?).

50 years ago - May 1936 (51 to be precise - we do not have any Magazine for 1937) The Magazine costs twopence, the cover is blue, a small photo shows a forest of large erect crosses in front of the church, and officers and services are listed alongside. There are 4 pages of text, half of which is taken up by the Vicar's letter. The Vicar is the Rev. F.P.P. Harvey - The Secretary of the Missionary Association thanks some ladies for eight pairs of socks to be sent to SPG House. There is a Lads' Club. At the Easter Vestry in the Club Room Messrs. F. Tandy and C.A. Child were re-elected Vicar's and People's Warden respectively. Funds are being raised for the furnishing of the Children's Corner. An enjoyable Easter Social is described and Jumble Sale advertised as follows:

A Jumble Sale will take place in the Parish Hall on Friday 15th May. Doors will be open at 2.30pm to admit only those who have tickets. Others will be admitted at 3pm. Price of admission 3d. Tea will be served during the afternoon. Postcards will be left at the houses in the parish during the first week of May and any who have Jumble to send should fill up the postcards and send them to the Vicarage as soon as possible being particular to state which day of the two mentioned will be most convenient for the collector to call. The proceeds will be divided between the District Nurse Fund and the Missionary Association.

100 years ago - 1887 The Tower and Spire are due to be built. In May it was determined to invite tenders for carrying out the work. Subscriptions for this have been sought for months. Incidentally all the church's work is financed by subscriptions, charitable causes included. Of these there are a great many, in the absence of the Welfare State. - The May magazine is not particularly interesting, but the January edition contains these two fascinating items:

Church Conference: *The election of three representatives of the laity of this parish took place in the Vestry We welcome the establishment of this Church Conference, as calculated to awaken in laymen a greater interest in the affairs of the Church, and encourage them to engage actively in her work. In these days when the very existence of the Church, as a National one, is threatened, it is of the utmost importance that all its members should arm themselves in its defence; But it is not only from without, but also from within that danger may be feared. Difference of opinion and party strife often interfere with the harmony of religion Nothing tends more to the reconciling of differences and to those mutual concessions which bring about unity, than the meeting of those who think differently, for the purpose of friendly discussion*

Our Schools: *The anxious day of inspection has come and gone, and the result of a somewhat increased Grant would be more satisfactory if H.M. Inspector were not quite so hard upon the Teachers. (There follows extracts from H.M. Inspector's report on the Boys' School, Girls' School and Infants' School:) "The Infants Read, Write and Spell very nicely, and their Arithmetic on slates is very fairly good. Singing is not above the average. Marching is orderly if a little noisy. There is a great deal of Needlework, and much of it very creditable. Order is maintained successfully".*

AROUND THE SPIRE

Mr. Gerwyn Anthony who has been in hospital for several weeks is now out and making good progress. He is hoping to spend some time with Janet and Mark Robinson in their new venture 'The Haven' in Herefordshire as part of his convalescence.

Greta Harries has also been ill recently with eye trouble and we wish her well.

We wish Violet Clark every happiness in her new home in Laurel Road Flats. After her recent illness it was thought better that she should be re-housed in some more suitable accommodation.

Our very efficient PCC Secretary was very much the proud father when his daughter Angela was baptised in our church on 22nd March. We are very pleased to welcome the new addition as well as her mother and older sister.

The coffee morning held at Wayside on 2nd March was a great success and raised the staggering sum of £360 for the Royal Marsden Hospital. Congratulations to Audrey Wilson and her helpers for such a magnificent effort.

FROM THE REGISTERS

BAPTISMS

March 22	Angela Jane Baldwin	72 Wordsworth Road
	Catharine Manda Pearce	28 Longford Close
	Luke Clive James	12 Sanders Close
	Laura Christina Reece	23 Byron Close

FUNERAL

April 15	Dorothy Smith	8 Westbank Road	aged 67
----------	---------------	-----------------	---------

DATES TO NOTE

May	2	10.00	Churchyard Working Party	
	6	20.00	Stewardship Supper at Lady Eleanor Holles School	
	7	20.00	Liturgical Committee	
	8	19.30	Scout Group AGM	
	10	16.30	United Service for Christian Aid at Percy Road Methodist	
	13	20.00	Music & Ministry with Healing	[Church
	19	20.00	CCG AGM at Rectory School	
	20-23		Christian Resources Exhibition at Sandown Park	
	21	20.00	Deanery Synod	
	31	09.30	Stewardship Renewal Campaign Closes	
June	4	20.00	Closing Stewardship Supper at Lady Eleanor Holles School	
	6	10.00	Churchyard Working Party	
	7		PENTECOST	
	9	20.00	Properties Committee	
	10	20.00	Music and Ministry and Healing	
		20.00	Colin Morris at Kew Methodist Church	
	15	20.00	Confirmation at St. James by Bishop of Kensington	
		20.00	Hampton Council of Churches	