

'And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town.' *Matthew 10.14*

These are part of the instructions which Jesus gave to the twelve disciples sent out to preach the gospel. It's not just a question of not playing ball, but something more significant. It is what Lent is about, a time to 'shake of the dust from your feet' as you leave behind the attitudes, strategies, ideas and actions which are unacceptable to God.

Shaking off the dust, and its parallels in 'spring-cleaning' of ourselves, our parish and homes, and the wider community, is indeed fitting for a time of preparation. In Lent, we prepare ourselves for the events to which we look both back and forward. We look back and see how the sufferings, death and resurrection of Jesus inform and stir our lives today. We make a memorial of them, not just remembering them, but make a memorial, allow past events to live today so having a reality and a direct influence upon us and all our being today and tomorrow. In shaking off the accumulated dust, Lent teaches us to recognise our own nakedness in God's presence and in seeing our own nakedness we see Christ's nakedness on the cross, which ends not in shame, but in glorious new life. Each of us knows areas in our own life which will be painful, shameful, hard to acknowledge as needing the dust removing, but unless wounds are exposed to the light they cannot be healed.

And such a 'shaking off' is doubly topical because this word 'shake off' lies behind a word which has come into our vocabulary so recently but with such power - the word is Intifada. Intifada means, in Arabic, a shaking off, a jumping to one's feet, a recovery. Intifada means the painful shaking off of the brutal occupation by Israel of the lands which for centuries have been the homelands of the Palestinian peoples.

We hear of violence, we see acts of aggression on the television between Israeli forces and Palestinian people in the Intifada. Recently, on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, some of us saw, heard about, and felt, the tensions, just under the surface and spilling over. Boys being picked out of a crowd at random by soldiers, Palestinian-registered cars being turned back on the road, villages closed, Palestinian-owned shops closed, except for three hours each day. We met people who suffer and who minister to suffering. Our minds and hearts were so stirred by this that in Lent 1991, I hope we can focus on Israel and Palestine, the Holy Land for Jews, Christians and Muslims on a variety of levels.

First 'Shake off' the dust of ignorance or apathy. In this issue of 'The Spire' there are articles relating to the situation which may inform you or lead you on to think, pray, act for peace and justice in this small corner of the earth where Jesus Christ was born, was crucified and rose victorious.

Second

Use this traditional Lenten time to discipline your needs and practice self-denial in solidarity with those who have no choice - they are denied things we take as essential - education, health care, work - because of their race or religion. To this end any money saved in our parish will be sent to Christ Church School, Nazareth, to help build lives based on love and equality, whether Christian, Jew or Muslim.

Third

We shall have guests visiting the parish, a photographic exhibition of the Intifada, a one-man performance of St. John's Gospel by the actor Paul Alexander, any profit going to our Lenten Appeal, a concert by Teddington Choral Society and Music in Church during Holy Week to draw us closer into the profound mystery of Jesus of Nazareth's life, death and resurrection.

Fourth

Come to terms with the violence we nurture in our hearts and lives through pride, ambition, wanting our own way. Consider how our society violates others: the weak, the hungry, the homeless, the outsider, and place that in the context of Jesus of Nazareth crucified.

Brian Leathard

A Prayer for Peace in The Holy Land

O Lord soften the stone hearts
of those who preach and practice
intolerance and bigotry;
as the sun's setting glow
softens the stone walls
of your Holy City, Jerusalem.

Lord, the rocky hills, the valleys
the deserts and the sea shores
are filled with the echoes of
centuries of pain.

Lord, bring peace to house and village.
Comfort the mothers who fret
and those who mourn.

Lord, keep strong the twisted old root
of the olive tree,
and protect the young vine.

Lord of water and stone,
of bread and wine,
Lord of resurrection,
feed hope, and bring peace
to this wracked but beautiful holy land.

Gerald Butt

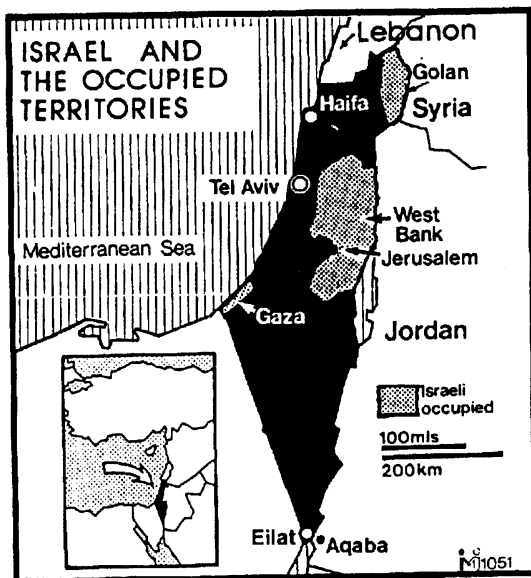
The above prayer and several other items in this issue are taken from 'Palestinian Pain and Promise' published by Christians Aware (737 0592).

Israel and the Occupied Territories

Jew and Arab once lived in relative harmony in the Middle East. The Jews, eventually settled in the 'Promised Land' and the Bible illustrates the relative rise and fall of the Jewish people. However, after centuries of persecution, culminating in the horrors of the Nazi holocaust, Jewish Zionists understandably wanted to return to 'the Homeland' which had been set up in the Balfour Declaration. When Britain held a League of Nations mandate to administer Palestine from 1918 until the State of Israel was declared in 1948, Britain encouraged immigration so that between 1918 and 1939 the Jewish population of Palestine increased from 8% to 28%. The remainder (70%) of the population were Palestinians, the people who lived there and had done for centuries. The Palestinians are an Arab people, 90% Moslem, 10% Christian. In 1948 war broke out between Jews and Arabs in Israel. An Armistice in 1949 defined the borders of Israel.

One can understand Israel's need for peace and security, and supposedly in pursuit of this, in 1967 Israel and her neighbours fought the Six-day War. Israel captured and occupied the Golan Heights from Syria, the Gaza Strip from Egypt, and Jerusalem and the West Bank from Jordan. The United Nations does not recognise Israel's military occupation of these lands lived in by Palestinians and so they are called the 'Occupied Territories'. In order to control the Occupied Territories Israeli military administration is in place. Palestinians in these territories are not citizens of Israel and their human rights are largely denied. Many people are held without trial or charge, arrested under catch-all military regulations and forced to live in miserable refugee camps.

(Extracted from 'The Palestinians' by Christian Aid)



كنيسة المسيح الانجيلية الاسقفية في الناصرة
כנסית המשיח האונג'לית האפסקופית בנצרת
CHRIST EVANGELICAL EPISCOPAL CHURCH - NAZARETH



3rd December 1990

My Dear Fr. Brian,

The more people discover that we simply exist, the greater the hope that we continue to be where we have been called to be, yes in HIS home-town. And this in itself will guarantee Christian presence in the land where our faith was born.

Thank you so much for your encouraging words. It took a while for your letter dated 30/10/90 to arrive. But it did arrive at last. And this note is mainly to assure you, and all the brothers and sisters in Christ in your country, that it is always a delight to meet with you, my brothers and sisters. And your visits add strength and encouragement, especially in these days of real crisis. Look us up when you are next in His land.

The situation is still tense. Many are not sure what may come next. We are facing a new crisis inside the country: an economic one. The officials speak of some \$35 billion in deficit. This is one result of the coming of new immigrants from the Soviet Union.

Our people will be the first to suffer, as they are the last to be hired, and the first to be fired. And many are thinking of finding other corners in this world of ours! As I have shared with you, we have become an insignificant number, some 1.8%. But our services are great and badly needed. Let us pray for His flock in His land. There is so much to worry about, but our trust in HIM who is able to keep and protect and give strength in time of weakness and hopelessness. Pray that we be given the power of the Spirit to offer life in the midst of death.

It will be nice to stop and visit with you. Perhaps one day when in the UK. In the meantime allow me to wish you and yours, and all involved in your ministry a most blessed Christmas season, and a peaceful 1991. Our Christmas may not be as happy as we want it to be, but I am sure it will bring us blessed memories of how God Almighty protected the holy family.

With kindest regards and every good wish,

Yours in Christ,

*Riah Abu El-Assal,
Archdeacon*

Lord, I am worried.

All you did in Gethsemane
Seems wasted.
You threw yourself to the ground
in prayer.
You shed drops of blood
in sweat.
Yet the suffering goes on
and on and on,
all over the world.
If you couldn't end it
in Gethsemane,
How will it end?

My Son, it will not end.

I never promised it would end.
The Good News of Gethsemane is not
that I will end it.
The Good News of Gethsemane is
That wherever tragedy strikes
wherever injustice has its wretched day
wherever my people cry out in pain,
I, the Man of Sorrows,
am with them.

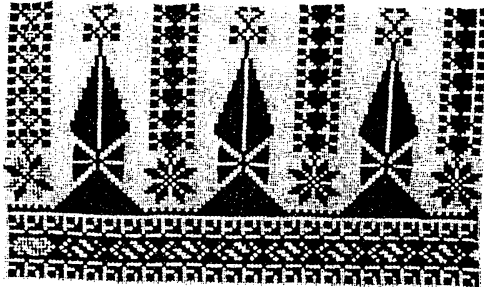
Timothy Biles 1986

An Appeal from the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem

First, and foremost, we ask fellow Christians around the world for their prayers. Nothing could be more important. We need your prayers so we can build bridges of understanding, bridges of justice for those who yearn for it, and bridges of reconciliation and good will in an inter-religious society. My people are in the midst of a crisis situation, one of perpetual suffering. They are walking the way of the cross and watching for the light of Christ at the end of the tunnel.

Secondly, we ask for your understanding. Our church life is not without blemishes, but these are the scars from nearly 2000 years of bearing the heat and burden in our days of oppression. We ask that, when you know a little about us, and of our situation, you will speak out on our behalf. This is not a political request, but a request to help remind the world that there are indeed Christians in the Holy Land and in the Middle East who date back to apostolic times. We need to remind the world-wide church of the eastern contribution to spirituality, especially through the early Church Fathers.

Thirdly, we ask you for your friendship and partnership. We, in the Middle East, need friends. WE have enough enemies. We do not ask you to sacrifice the old, traditional friendships you have, but to make new ones as well. Both the Palestinians and the Jews could be your friends equally and, thus, we ask that we all be peacemakers and by our endeavours assist in availing justice for everyone. We all carry the same image and likeness of God.



Caring for our Churchyard

By an Order in Council dated 31 October 1990, our churchyard was (with certain exceptions) closed for burials.

From the beginning of March, the maintenance of the churchyard will become the legal responsibility of the Borough Council. We have had a meeting with local Councillors and the Borough's Head of Recreation, who is now to propose a management plan. When this has been agreed, we shall be able to see the extent of our remaining involvement.

It seems probable that there will be scope for continuing input by the church community in partnership with local residents who retain an interest: see Councillor John Webb's article overleaf.

Jack Gostling

Caring for our Churchyard

It started with a misunderstanding Can we have a contribution for 'The Spire'?
Of course, how much? - Oh about 300 words, that is!

No, not money - effort!

It would have been quicker and simpler to send a cheque for printing costs - but there is more to contributing than that. 'The Spire' needs both cash and communications.

That's the essence of community - a variety of ingredients and all fundamental.

The Samaritan's example in the New Testament is similar. The robbed and mugged man certainly needed money, but more than that he needed personal help and contact. It was given, and in a Biblical way, one person's problem, burden, was borne by another - practically.

But it is not just in the face of problems that sharing or contributing is the essence of community life, essential though that be. John Donne was right - if one member of a community suffers, a part of the community suffers - consequently the whole group is the less.

Reverse that and by sharing the pressure or an opportunity, the group is built up, community develops and it strengthens.

This principle is the same in a village community like ours. Be it those who ensure that the High Street is lit at Christmas, arrange the school's concert, the Community Computer Club and its Conservation Area or care for the churchyard.

With closure the Council now will take the responsibility for its maintenance - but rightly the church with the wider community being drawn in too, not only in work to enhance it but in planning and decisions, can ensure this asset, essentially part of Hampton Hill, continues to provide an open, green and living space, managed and cared for to a thought-out scheme.

These all, as do our churches, thrive on a personal involvement and support. They grow and enhance the life of our community collectively - that is what contribution is - and they expire without it.

Next time there is a local need, should we share in it, have communion with it, or pray someone else will? Next time I am asked to contribute to the church do I reach for a cheque and send it, or my coat and go in person?

John Webb (Councillor)

Volunteers are urgently needed to clean the church on the third and fifth weekends of the months! Please contact Lesley Mortimer (941 2345).

Letter to the Editor

I was delighted to read David Wilson's article in 'The Spire', announcing that the Community Care Group, with the financial assistance of the Fuel Allotment Charity, propose to transform the Church Hall into a Community Centre.

As a one-time scholar of St. James's Church of England Boys School, I am impelled to correct the suggestion that the main Hall was built on the old playground.

The main Hall remains essentially the same as when I did my three-R's; the only difference is the addition of the stage at the far end. The hall was then divided in two by a folding glass screen that ran on rails across the centre of the room. The screen was drawn back for assembly and prayers but closed when lessons commenced. The two halves were then further divided by cloth screens, making four classes. A favourite amusement was to prise tin-tacks out of the screens and place them surreptitiously, on the seat of the boy in front.

There was another classroom in what is now the kitchen and another in the vicinity of the present toilets. We did not enjoy the luxury of indoor toilets.

There was a small play area on the forecourt of the school. Part of this was encroached upon when the present entrance and toilets were built, when converted to the Church Hall. This is probably where the confusion has arisen. Our playground was the Recreation Ground, or Cricket Field, as we knew it.

Yours nostalgically,

E. Gubbins

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* **ST. JAMES'S CHURCH PARISH PARTY** *
P **P**
A **A**
R **R**
T **St. Francis de Sales Church Hall, Prince's Road** T
Y **Y**
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* **Tickets, £3 (Children £1.50), to include Supper** *
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Drivers Wanted Please

Under new rules, ambulances will no longer be available to take out-patients to hospital. There is thus an increased need for volunteers to provide transport for people. They will be paid for the use of their cars at a new mileage rate. Please contact the Community Care Group Office, 35 High Street, Hampton Hill (979 9662).

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* **Performance of St. John's Gospel** *

* **by Paul Alexander** *

* **Sunday 17 March at 7.30 pm** *

* **St. James's Church** *

* **Tickets £3 from the Vicarage** *

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Hampton Hill Association

The **Annual Buffet Supper Party** will be held from 7.30 - 11.30 pm on Saturday 23 February at St. Francis de Sales Church Hall, Prince's Road. There will be a country flavour with a licensed bar, music, dancing, competitions and entertainment. Tickets (£6 including supper) from Denis Dolan (979 8641), Dorothy Weston (979 6673) or Joyce Doughty (979 2839).

Around the Spire

Mrs. Alice Morrell-Long, who helped in our Post Office for years, has died. She was always ready for a few words or to give a helpful answer to any queries, and will certainly be missed. We send our sympathy to her family.

It isn't very often that we have an adult baptism, so it was very nice when Martin Hinckley was recently baptised as a new member of the church. In Christ's name we welcome him and hope in future to get to know him better.

From the Registers - December

Baptisms

2	Charlotte Kim Richardson	10 Chelsea Close
	Martin Roberts	48 Cavendish House, Richmond
	Benjamin James Parfitt	125 Burtons Road
	Philippa Grace Williams	16 High Street

Marriage

29 David Kevin Scaddon and Joy Yvonne Owen

Funerals

7	Stanley Victor Capon	64 Pigeon Lane, Hampton	
19	Alice Doreen Morrell-Long	123 High Street	Aged 76
27	Josephine Emily Dempster	91 Uxbridge Road	Aged 75
31	Reginald Freemantle	Oketon Nursing Home, Hampton Road, Teddington	Aged 78

Regular Weekly Services

Sunday	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Parish Communion
		(except first Sunday in month)
Monday to Friday	09.15	Morning Prayer
Tuesday	09.30	Holy Communion
Thursday	19.15	Holy Communion
		(with Ministry of Healing on the first Thursday in the month)

Other Services and Dates to Note

Feb.	2		Presentation of Christ in the Temple
	3	09.30	Informal Service
		18.30	Choral Evensong
	4	14.00	Editorial Board, 19 St. James's Road
	5	19.45	Bishop Wand School 21st Anniversary Communion Service taken by the Bishop of London, Bishop Wand School
		20.00	Deanery Synod, St. Augustine's Church, Whitton
		20.00	Tuesday Club: 'The Work of a Magistrate', Wayside
	9	19.30	Parish Party, St. Francis de Sales Church Hall
	10	09.30	Parish Communion - The Rev. John Cleaver (Primary Adviser, London Board for Schools) to preach
		18.30	Prayer 'n' Praise
	11	20.00	Taizé Prayer Meeting, All Saints' Church, Hampton
	13		Ash Wednesday
		20.00	Parish Communion with Imposition of Ashes
	17	18.30	Choral Evensong
	19	20.00	Tuesday Club: Bring & Buy Auction, Wayside
	23	19.30	H.H.A. Annual Buffet Supper Party
	24	18.30	Prayer 'n' Praise
	26	20.00	P.C.C., Vestry
Mar.	1	14.30	Women's World Day of Prayer, St. Mary's Hampton
	3	09.30	Informal Service - The R.N.L.I.
		18.30	Choral Evensong

Advance Notices

Mar.	5	20.00	Tuesday Club: 'Flora of Mexico', Wayside
	7	20.00	Institution and Induction of Rodney Cash as Vicar of St. Augustine's Church, Whitton
	10		Mothering Sunday
	13	20.00	Taizé Prayer Meeting, St. James's Church
	17	19.30	Performance of St. John's Gospel by Paul Alexander
	19	20.00	Tuesday Club: 'Citizens Advice Bureau', Wayside
	21	20.00	P.C.C., Vestry
	23	19.30	Teddington Choral Society Concert, St. James's Church

COPY DATE FOR MARCH ISSUE: 10 FEBRUARY