

Have you ever noticed the Convent at the Hogarth Roundabout? Take the A316 up towards Central London, pass Richmond and Mortlake, over Chiswick Bridge and just by the roundabout and flyover on the righthand side is St. Mary's Convent and Nursing Home. It seems a strange place to find nuns, but there they are, Sisters of St. Margaret, an Anglican enclosed order. With traffic roaring past 24 hours a day the buildings are squeezed between the Brewery and a huge factory marking the beginning (or end) of the M4. In the midst of fast, urban, industrial life is a house where people take time, in work (caring for the sick, frail and dying), in prayer and in care for each other. And the most important thing is that they are not removed from the world, but they bring the world into their midst.

In November, a kaleidoscope effect seems very often to come over us - a few mild days and we have back summer, yet we are also compelled to look forward - the Christmas decorations are appearing in the shops, the children are learning carols, and as the days get shorter they seem even busier. Perhaps it is then in keeping that Remembrance Sunday falls in the middle of this month, when we recall the hideous, wasteful and tragic reality of our behaviour towards one another, in warfare - a reality somewhere, every day, every year. For in forcing us to look back, Remembrance Sunday, if it is to have any continuing significance, must also help us to re-order our lives for the future. Another chance for us to do that is to attend the parish Quiet Day on 30 November - taking stock, giving us space to recall our thoughts and prepare ourselves before diving, without pausing for breath, into the Christmas whirl.

The Sisters of St. Margaret at Chiswick, are, if you will, a living parable for November. There they are physically squeezed into our world of consumerism, work, cars and planes, speed and flyovers, witnessing to humankind's need to be firmly rooted and lovingly valued, travelling at a speed which each can achieve, using our God-given scientific ability in the care of those in need, consuming what is needed rather than all that is desired.

For me this is at the heart of the Gospel. This month in both our preaching and in the Hampton Council of Churches Autumn Lecture Series we are considering what the Decade of Evangelism may mean to us, and the presence of those nuns is a salutary reminder of that Gospel. We are committed to being salt or leaven, touching the community in which we are set. I don't think that the Kingdom of God is ushered in by shouting about it, nor will the Good News take root if we detach it and keep it distinct, a Sunday morning job; no, our commitment is rather like that convent - it is there, surprisingly part of our ordinary daily lives, it enables us to give to our lives and to communicate to others a quality, which would otherwise not be present, it can be seen and valued, it affects the way we are, and the way of our world, questioning the values that have brought us to be as we are and the goals to which we aspire.

Remember the words of the Magnificat:

He has shown the strength of his arm:
 he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones
 and has exalted the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things
 and the rich he has sent away empty.

Brian Leathard

Parish Quiet Day - 30 November

It is in St. James's tradition that we have a quiet day together at the beginning of Advent. We have generally had the opportunity of holding this at the Convent of the Sisters of the Church at Ham Common in its peaceful Conference Room and with its lovely garden.

This year it will be held again at St. Michael's Convent, Ham, on Saturday 30 November, the day before Advent Sunday, from 10.30 am - 4 pm. The conductor this year will be the Rev. Jim Goldie, Chaplain at Bishop Wand School, where a number of our parish children attend. It will be great to welcome him with us.

Participants will need to bring a packed lunch; there is provision for coffee and tea at 10.30 am, 1 pm and at tea-time in the afternoon. There is a charge for using the Conference Room, and for the tea and coffee. £2.50 per person will be collected; if people wish to give more, it won't be refused!

Please give me names for transport: whether you can provide it or need it. I will go round with a list in November.

Hannah Stanton

Where are you?

Dear Lord - where are you?
When I worry, fret and stew,
I pray to you each day,
But you don't pop in to say
'I got your message loud and clear -
That is why I have called here.
Everything will be alright,
You just do not understand. It's out of your sight.'
Instead there is no answer, not a sound,
But I still know he is around.
Because of the faith I have found
Everything will be O.K.
The Lord answers prayers in his own way.

Patricia Mitchell

Harvest Festival

Harvest Festival is new to me. I was fascinated by the event and by the excitement of the preparations made for it.

I can still vividly remember the fun I had at school when we spent a day's class in the ricefield rather than in classroom. We helped one of the farmers harvest his rice. In return, we were given a fifth of what we had gathered. My father who was the director of a Christian College suspended classes for one week to allow this and students had the opportunity to earn money for tuition. This practice no longer exists.



I wonder why there was no religious harvest celebration in the Philippines. First technological advancement has led to multiple croppings. Before harvest time for rice was in October. Fruits are in season in different months of the year. With the use of irrigation and chemicals rice and fruits can be harvested two or three times a year. There is no annual harvest season.

Second, the greater part of the arable land belongs to a few rich families. It is still a dream for a great number of Filipino farmers to own a small piece of land. The Land Reform Programme has been a policy of all administrations but none so far has been successful.

Third, the presence of multinational organisations has reduced the quality of life of small farm owners and farm workers. Pineapples, bananas and mangoes are among the top dollar earners from the Philippines. The mass production of these is in the hands of foreigners. With the help of government they were able to control huge tracts of the best land. One company controls 18,000 acres around Mt. Matutum. Another plants pineapple practically in a whole province. Plantations of bananas are spread over three other provinces. The three big corporations can easily export about 500 million US Dollars' worth a year! This is a lot of money but unfortunately only 13% of it comes back to the Philippine economy. The farmer is given only 1.6% of the market price for his produce. Farm workers are among the lowest paid in the Philippines. There is always a pocket of 'slum' dwellers near a big farm or factories. It is not a surprise to see that 65% of the children of farm workers are malnourished. Workers who fight for better wages and work conditions end up dead, in prison or among the New People's Army, the armed branch of the Communist Party of the Philippines. Instead of being a boost to the economy, multinational corporations have become a liability.

I have painted a gloomy picture of the Philippine agricultural life. On the other hand, the independent farmer still sustains the needs of the nation and makes life bearable.

There are seventy other provinces that help sustain the life of the nation. The need to put a Harvest Thanksgiving day in the Filipino calendar is felt. The Philippine Christian Church should lead in this. It will surely be in the 1992 calendar of Pasay Baptist Church in Metro Manila.

I thank St. James's Church for making me a part of this year's Harvest Festival and opening my mind and eyes to the need for such a celebration in the Philippines.

Bob Betia (A Baptist Minister from Manila)

A New Harvest Hymn

(Based on 'We plough the fields and scatter')

We fill our fridge and freezer
With good things from Bejam,
With oven chips and kidney beans
And good old English lamb.
Bejam, Quicksave and Sainsbury's,
Co-op and Gateway too,
For frozen food, for frozen food,
Our grateful thanks are due.
All good gifts around us
Are sent from heaven above;
Then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord,
For all his love.

But what about the millions
Who starve in far-off lands?
How can they sing God's praises
With turned up empty hands?
So give to all our brothers,
Give, give, give, give, give, give,
'Til all are fed with daily bread:
Let starving people live!
All good gifts around us
Are sent from heaven above;
Then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord,
For all his love.

*Mark Scruby, aged 9
(member of The Jays)*



They shall not plant and another eat

(Isaiah 65.22)

'Now we are all landlords', said one of the villagers of Seelathanallur in Tamil Nadu, as they celebrated this year's rice crop, harvested from their own land.

It wasn't always so. Like countless people in India, the villagers of Seelathanallur used to have no choice but to hire themselves as poorly paid wage labourers to a local wealthy landlord. One year when they went on strike to try to achieve a higher daily wage, the landlord actually ploughed the unharvested rice paddy back into the ground.

But now, with the help of Christian Aid's partner LAFTI (Land for Tillers' Freedom), they have been able to buy land for themselves. The Indian government is committed to distributing land to the landless, and there is theoretically money available for loans to develop the land. Yet there is often a problem getting justice at a local level. Rural banks regard landless peasants as poor risks for loans, and refuse them. But Krishnammal and her husband Jagannathan, at LAFTI, believe passionately in the right of those who work the land to own its harvest, and they have great faith in the people. So LAFTI will stand as a guarantor to the banks for the people's ability to repay the loans from the fruits of their labour.

This year the people of Seelathanallur celebrated their harvest - called 'Pongal' - in the traditional way. They decorated their cows and bulls, their working companions, in bright colours; and they cooked rice and jaggery in an earthenware pot over the fire. Jaggery is a sweet brown substance produced from a kind of palm tree, and when boiled it bubbles up over the top of the pot. [As we learned at our own Harvest Festival Service], at this point the women shout 'Pongalo, Pongal! - Ponguhar Mangalam Enkum Ponguha' ('Happy harvest! Let love and good deeds overflow all over the world').

But this year was special because, like other villagers helped by LAFTI, the harvest they offered to God was their own. In a letter to Christian Aid supporters, the partners of Christian Aid wrote:

'10,000 families of LAFTI, each blessed with one acre, celebrate Pongal with a new freedom of joy that they can offer their own paddy [unhusked rice] to God - whereas all those years as labourers they could only offer their wage. They are happy and proud that they can stock on average 30 bags of paddy, a start for their freedom from dependence and slavery'.

(From the Christian Aid Harvest Anthology)

A Thousand Pounds by Christmas !!!



Coffee Mornings at 10.30 am

Friday 8 November - 40 Gloucester Road, Teddington

Thursday 20 November - Open House at Wayside, St. James's Road

Thursday 28 November - with Bring Buy Christmas Gifts - 30 St. James's Road

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Supper Parties at 8 pm

Thursday 14 November - Lasagne - 106 Park Road

Saturday 30 November - Curry - The Vicarage

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Mince Pies and Punch

Saturday 7 December - 6.30 to 8 pm - 16 Cranmer Road

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Garage Sale

Saturday 9 November - 10 am - 68 Park Road

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Do-It-Yourself Messiah

Friday 13 December - 7.30 pm - Church

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Sales of Cakes, pies, etc.

Sundays November 3 and December 1 - Church

Dawnlight

Please note that the revised date of performance of this work will be Sunday 8 March 1992.

This is a big commitment for the parish, and may certainly be looked on as a contribution to the Decade of Evangelism. But without 100% effort from everyone, it just won't happen.

If you haven't already given in your name to Stuart Ward, 979 4906, please consider doing so. Much needed are more male actors.

Dawnlight will be costumed, and Margaret Revis, 979 4858, is gathering together old curtains and pieces of material that have a Medieval look (ie no velvet or nylon). If anyone can help with these or anything else, please let her know. Also help with sewing *simple costumes* would be appreciated.

Save the Children

Last year Save the Children, Teddington and Hampsons Branch, held a Christmas Sale at Wayside which was well supported.

This year they are holding a Christmas Lunch 'n' Buy at All Saints' Church Hall, The Avenue, Hampton on Saturday 9 November from 12 noon. On sale will be Christmas cards, calendars, wrapping paper, gifts, toys, decorations, etc. Also there will be a superb collection of cakes, mince pies (can be frozen for Christmas), presents, etc. There will be a raffle.

Please come again and give the fund your support - enjoy a lunch with your friends and shop early for Christmas.



Kate O'Sullivan

Hampton Fuel Allotment Charity

The Charity has at its disposal funds to distribute to the residents of Hampton and Hampton Hill who are in particular financial need or hardship. Grants are made, for example, to cover or assist with fuel bills (electricity, oil, gas or coal), clothing for school children, items of equipment for the disabled and in many otherways.

If you have received a grant in the past or wish to apply for one now, you can do so easily and confidentially by calling at the Vicarage for an application form and returning it to the Vicar.

Do you know anyone who would benefit from such financial help? If you have any queries please ring 979 2069.

Scout Group News

The cubs camped at Bragger's Wood in the summer, visiting Brownsea Island and Beaulieu. They are now well into their autumn programme, enjoying swimming and football in addition to their Wednesday evening meetings.

The scouts have had a very successful month. Two teams entered the annual District Day prowl competition held near Dorking and one of these won the trophy. The group also took part in the annual charity collection for the Mayor's Fund, dressed as robbers and gangsters and collecting at various points in the borough by holding up the traffic, and won the Newson trophy for best group.

The Beaver Section is currently without a leader. Meetings are temporarily being run by a rota of parents but a permanent leader is urgently needed.

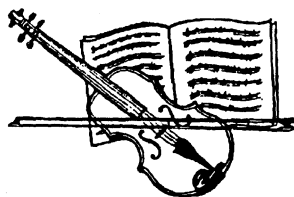
Susan Horner

Advent Sunday Recital

Phillida Bannister, singer; Alpin Smart, guitar; and Stuart Ward, reader, will be giving a recital in the church on Sunday evening, 1 December, at 6.30 pm in aid of MENCAP.

Do come along and support these artists, you are sure to enjoy yourselves.

A glass of wine, coffee and biscuits will be served after the recital.



From the Registers - September

Baptisms

8	Jordan Victoria Markham-Mulford	58 Fairfax Road, Teddington
	Emma Charlotte Irwin	2 Stourton Avenue, Hanworth
	Max James Nigel Irwin	2 Stourton Avenue, Hanworth
	Chloe Elizabeth Eyre	16 Laurel Road
	Emily Charlotte Eyre	16 Laurel Road
15	Alistair James Lynn	21A Bushy Park Gardens
22	Aimee Victoria Scaddon	56 High Street
	James Edward Cuming	9 Roy Grove

Marriages

7	Roger Stephen Marillat and Teresa Sharon Luffrum
28	Michael David Fawcett and Debbie Elaine Burke

Funerals

3	Charles Gordon Wilson	4 Byron Close	Aged 72
10	Elsie Eileen Seedwell	72 Pigeon Lane	
10	Florence Davies	Surbiton	Aged 83
16	Eric Charles Edwards	4 Holly Road	Aged 73
30	Lavinia Joyce Tandy	179 Uxbridge Road	Aged 66

Dates to Note

Nov.	3	10.30	Cakes etc. sale in church
	4	14.00	Editorial Board, 19 St. James's Road
	5	20.00	Tuesday Club: Open Evening, Wayside
	6	14.30	Mothers' Union: Creative Christmas, Wayside
		20.00	HCC Lecture: Evangelisation and Dialogue, Methodist Church, Percy Road, Hampton
	8	10.30	Coffee Morning, 40 Gloucester Road, Teddington
	9	10.00	Garage Sale, 68 Park Road
		12.00	Save the Children Lunch 'n' Buy, All Saints' Church Hall, The Avenue, Hampton
	20	20.00	PCC, Vestry
	13	20.00	HCC Lecture: 'Thy Kingdom Come', Methodist Church, Percy Road, Hampton
	14	20.00	Lasagne Supper, 106 Park Road
	19	20.00	Tuesday Club: Brinsworth House Entertainment Artists Benevolent Fund, Wayside
	20	10.30	Open House Coffee Morning, Wayside
		20.00	Final HCC Meeting on Decade of Evangelism: 'In Discussion' Methodist Church, Percy Road, Hampton
	27	20.00	Taizé Service, St. James's Church
	28	10.30 to Noon	Grand Bring & Buy Christmas Gift Coffee Morning, 30 St. James's Road
	30		St. Andrew the Apostle
		10.30	Parish Quiet Day, St. Michael's Convent, Ham
		20.00	Curry Supper, Vicarage
Dec.	1	10.30	Cakes etc. sale in church
		18.30	Advent Sunday Recital in aid of MENCAP
	2	14.00	Editorial Board, 19 St. James's Road
	3	20.00	Tuesday Club: Schools in the 1990's, Wayside
	4	14.30	Mothers' Union: the Vicar 'On Keeping Advent', Wayside
	6	19.15	Bishop Wand School Service at St. Martin-in-the-Fields with the Bishop of London (in connection with the retirement of Mr. D.G. Jones, Headmaster)
	7	18.30 to 20.00	Mince Pies and Punch, 16 Cranmer Road

Advance Notices

Dec.	11	20.00	PCC, Vestry
	13	19.30	Do-It-Yourself Messiah, Church
	17	20.00	Tuesday Club: Christmas Party, Wayside

COPY DATE FOR DECEMBER ISSUE: 10 NOVEMBER