

THE SERVER

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF
THE GUILD OF SERVANTS OF THE SANCTUARY



Volume 15 Number 11
AUTUMN 1991

GUILD OF SERVANTS OF THE SANCTUARY

affiliated with the Scottish Guild of Servers and the Order of St Vincent, America

Patrons

The Archbishop of Canterbury
The Archbishop of York
The Archbishop of Wales



Objects of the Guild

To raise the spiritual tone of altar servers

To promote a conscientious performance
of the duties of altar servers

To encourage more frequent attendance
at the holy eucharist, in addition to times
of duty.

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EDITORIAL.....	2
FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL.....	2
CHANCERY BOOK.....	3
R.I.P.....	3
COF REPORT (<i>Conclusion</i>).....	6
FESTIVALS.....	7
FORTHCOMING EVENTS.....	7
TITCH.....	8
PREACHING GOOD NEWS <i>Bishop of Gloucester</i>	9
ABOUT GOD -(10)- And in JESUS CHRIST -(a) <i>Canon Wm. H Barnard</i>	13
S PAUL'S CATHEDRAL SERMON <i>Bishop of London</i>	13
WHO'S WHO?.....	16
PG2 FESTIVAL SERMON <i>Bishop of Dover</i>	16
SOME OF MY FAVOURITE THINGS <i>Fr Howard Cocks</i>	18
GLASTONBURY SERMON <i>Bishop of Winchester</i>	21
NEWS FROM THE CHAPTERS.....	24
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.....	27

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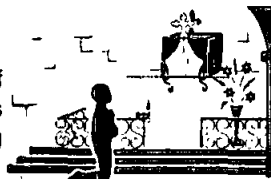
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EDITORIAL

ONE MAN'S VIEW

Many of you, I am sure, will be sorry to learn of the death of Fr Robert Buttolph, the artist of Titch, in April. He was aged 74 and an earlier stroke had affected his drawing hand—hence Titch's farewell in the Spring issue.



Inadvertently the concluding portion of the COF report was omitted from the last issue—the typist forgot to turn the page and I failed to notice the omission—I have included the missing portion in this issue.

Everybody must have heard of the Oberammergau Passion Play, performed every ten years, as a result of a vow of 1634. But who has heard of the Erl or Thiersee, in the Austrian Tyrol, Passion Plays, performed every six years eg Erl—1991, Thiersee—1994, Erl—1997? or even the Prestbury, Cheltenham Passion Play, performed, currently, every three years? Whereas the Oberammergau has daily performances, The Prestbury play has only two performances, each lasting about an hour on Good Friday morning and afternoon.

The Continental plays are in theatres, although the Oberammergau stage is open to the elements, whilst Prestbury has three stages around a field so that the audience moves to the action. The productions are all very different, Oberammergau and Prestbury, for instance, use fixed sets but Erl makes a wide use of theatrical devices to produce background scenery, but the important thing is that each of them proclaims the essential message "that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son". I would recommend that everybody should see at least one of them, but then I'm an addict!

Raymund J M Waker

FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

General Council Elections Easter 1992

The following Councillors are due to retire on rotation at Easter next but will be eligible for re-election.

LG1 North London
PG3 Sussex
PG4 Hants, E Wilts, W Sussex
PG10 Herts & Beds
PG11 Avon, Glos, Soms, W Wilts
PG12 Wales
PG19 W Yorks
PG20 Northum, Durham, Tyneside,
N Cleveland
PG25 N Yorks, S Cleveland

Terry Delaney
Raymond CG Packham
Malcolm RH Perkins
Trefor H James
Raymund JM Waker
Robert W Bradley
Geoffrey Crowther

Brewis Wellock
David Lester

Nomination papers will be sent to the respective chapters in December.

CHANTRY BOOK

MARCH

James Anthony William Fray
Ernest William George Portnall, priest

JUNE

Malcolm Gould
David Carter Rutter, priest

APRIL

Robert Buttolph, priest
Jim Sutcliffe
Frank Winderbank, priest

Unto The Faithful,
O Lord, life is changed,
not taken away; and
the abode of this earthly
journey being dissolved
an eternal dwelling is
prepared in heaven.



R.I.P.

Robert Buttolph, priest

Fr Buttolph died in April, aged 74. He was a Norfolk man, born in Wymondham, and spent his early life in Hethersett where he was a server and a member and great supporter of the Guild. Serving in the Norfolk Regiment in India and Burma during the 1939-45 War he was a great help to the Army chaplains. He taught for a time but responded to a call for ordinands in the West Indies and trained at Codrington College in Barbados for ordination in Antigua Cathedral. He spent twenty years in that Diocese. He designed the National flag for the State of St Kitts when it became independent.

Returning to England he helped at S Peter Parmentergate, Norwich, for some time and then was appointed to S Thomas, Longbridge, Huddersfield, retiring in 1987. Readers of 'The Server' will appreciate his artistic gifts in his adventures of 'Titch', a mischievous server boy and the much teased nuns. It was a joy to renew his acquaintance from his early youth and subsequent return to Norfolk, and to welcome his contribution to 'The Server'. His apt cartoon when the Pope visited this country will be long remembered. WV

Malcolm Gould

Malcolm had been a member of the Guild for 42 years, many of them being Secretary and Organist of the chapter of SS David & Gwynllwy, Gwent, South Wales. He was also treasurer and organist at S Peter's Church, Blaenavon and a trustee of The Father Ignatius Memorial Trust.

He died on the 21st June 1991 in the Liver Unit of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham, aged 58 years.

Malcolm was a very quiet and precise man whose whole life was devoted to the Church and you could rely on him to be at every chapter meeting. His enthusiasm was an example to all.

A requiem Mass was held at S Peter's church Blaenavon, the celebrant was Fr Bert Lloyd, the vicar of Blaenavon. The lesson was read by councillor R Bradley, psalm 122 "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord" was sung by the Brothers of the chapter. The Bishop of Monmouth, a former vicar of Blaenavon, and clergy from the Church in Wales and the Roman Catholic Church attended.

Fr Richard Pain, our chaplain, paid tribute to Malcolm in his address to a packed church, and his text was psalm 122. Following the Mass his body was cremated at the Gwent Crematorium, Fr Lloyd officiated and Fr David Nicholson read the lesson.

Ernest William George Portnall, priest

Brother Portnall was one of the original members of the chapter of SS Peter & Paul at Bath, when it was inaugurated in June 1945: he was, in fact, one the servers who had campaigned for a Bath chapter. He had held an almost life-long desire to be a priest but had been unable to satisfy those in authority, until his retirement from business came, when he set off for St Stephen's House at Oxford, on the following Monday.

In due course he was made deacon in 1981 and priested the following year, serving as an NSM at the church of the Most Holy Trinity, Bath, where he had worshipped for many years. Sadly he was found dead, in the church he loved and served, one morning in March this year, when saying his morning office.

Father Bill, as he was known after his ordination, had served the church in Bath and the GSS there, well and faithfully, and his sudden death at the age of 74 was a shock and loss to all. The Very Reverend the Dean of Bocking, who had been his vicar for most of his sacred ministry, officiated at the Requiem Mass, to a congregation filling the church, with many standing throughout. Well done, good and faithful servant.

David Carter Rutter, priest

Born in 1925, the son of a corn merchant, David Rutter was steeped in the church and music from a very early age. He sung in the choir of York Minster whilst attending the Bishop Holgate Grammar School. He learned to play the piano and the organ and could often be found sitting with Sir Edward Bairstow turning the pages for him. Whilst still in the sixth form he was accepted by Archbishop William Temple for ordination training. Talking to a Headmaster friend soon after, the Archbishop remarked that he had just been interviewed by a sixteen year old boy who was going to be a priest. Such was David's singlemindedness. He won three scholarships to Oxford where he read History and Theology at Exeter College. Then on to Cuddesdon, where he met Dr Kenneth Riches (later to become Bishop of Lincoln). Ordained deacon in 1952 he served a title at Thorpe and was priested in 1953. He stayed there two more years and was described by his vicar as a "most remarkable curate" always willing to undertake the most harrowing of tasks.

Preferment came early to David and he was only 28 when he was appointed Succentor and Junior Cardinal at S Paul's Cathedral in London. Canon Collins, the Precentor, was much involved with the CND movement and so most of the work ordering the services fell to the Succentor, including large civic services of national importance, like the funeral of Sir Winston Churchill. At the age of 40 he was given the prestigious appointment of Precentor and Canon Sacrist of Lincoln Cathedral. A post he held until his death. David disliked alternative services intensely. He believed passionately in the adequacy of the Book of Common Prayer, and was a founder member and later President of the Lincoln branch of the Prayer Book Society.

From the moment David Rutter arrived in Lincoln, he sought out the local chapter of the Guild of Servants of the Sanctuary and gave it his unstinting support. As Chaplain

he was ever present at the monthly office, always ready to help, encourage, counsel or support. He would sing the Office, play the organ or preach the sermon at a moments notice if necessary, or even do all three if attendance was poor. Although his health deteriorated constantly over the last ten years he remained faithful to the guild to the end. He attended the May meeting in great pain and with his eyesight gone recognised his many friends by the sound of their voices. He had a cheerful word for all. He was the most dedicated of priest and the most generous of friends. He will be so greatly missed.

The combined Lincoln and Boston Chapters sang a requiem for him in the church of S Andrew, Heckington, on Tuesday 2nd July.

Fredrick Shaw, Reader

The chapter of S Werburgh, Stockport lost a committed member of the Guild over many years when Fred Shaw died on 20th February, 1991, aged 77 years. There was nothing Fred liked better than the Anglican Church in all the beauty and dignity of the ceremonial of the Anglo-Catholic tradition done at its best without fussiness or distraction. He would often say 'Good serving just happens and should never be a distraction'.

Fred was a Reader and Server at the parish church of S George, New Mills in the Diocese of Derby. Whenever he served at the altar he would say to the priest, after the vestry prayer 'Thank you Father for the privilege of serving at God's altar with you'. He loved classical music and had a sense of humour which was with him to the end. His discipline of daily prayer and the offices was an example to us all. He was a very learned man and his sermons were quite brilliant, although not always appreciated by some.

Many Servers and Readers filled the parish church for the solemn Requiem Mass at which the vicar, Fr Jim Norton, a former chaplain of the chapter, celebrated. The occasion was memorable and ended with that great resurrection hymn "Thine be the glory".

Frank Winderbank, priest

Born of Harry and Ida Winderbank, the middle of three children, in 1934, Frank was very much Yorkshireman. He was proud to have received his secondary education at the renowned Queen Elizabeth Grammar School in Wakefield.

His first paid employment was in journalism where he was able to use to good effect both his mastery of the English language and his ironic wit. It was during this period of his life that Frank felt the call to service in the Church and he worked for some time as a lay organising secretary for the Church of England Children's Society before going to Sarum Theological College to train for the Sacred Priesthood. He was deaconed to a curacy in Lindley in 1963 where he stayed for three years learning his priestcraft from a very sound catholic teacher working a rather respectable "Matins" parish. Frank moved on then to be curate to Albert Batsleer in the very famous catholic shrine of S John the Baptist, Staveley in Derbyshire.

Frank's love of ceremonial and ritual was given full rein here. Enveloped in swirling clouds of incense, draped in vestments encrusted with jewels, Frank would proclaim the gospel with that marvellously fruity swooping voice and then expound it with the

clarity and the vivacity of a real teacher. Frank made many friendships at Staveley—friendships which survive to this day. He worked hard to build a thriving Church community in a tough mining district called Inkersall and his ministry to children and young people was especially valued here.

Frank's preaching gifts were recognised when he took on the role of Clerical Organising Secretary for the Church of England Children's Society in various places from 1970 until 1987. During this time he visited literally hundred of parishes. His preaching was always adroit and funny and he served the Children's Society very well indeed. His genius for friendship attracted many people who became life long friends at this time.

But at heart Frank remained a parish priest and he longed to get back into parish work. The Bishop of Chester offered him the living of S Stephen, Newton Flowerly Field, in 1987 and he worked devotedly there until his untimely death on 26th April this year, shortly after saying Mass on S Mark's Day.

Frank will be remembered with deep affection by the countless people whose lives he changed for the good. Many young people had been encouraged by him to stretch themselves and achieve the seemingly impossible; many have received healing in times of sorrow or fright or selfdoubt; many have roared with laughter because of his sharp (but never malicious) wit. But most of all we shall remember Frank as he wanted to be remembered—as a parish priest pounding the streets in cassock, cloak and biretta bringing the word of God to the hearts and lives of all whom he touched. Left to Frank the last sentence is the only obituary he would have aspired to. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

CANDIDATES FOR ORDINATION FUND (Conclusion)

Annual Report for Year 1990

For the record, we are pleased to say the following Bros were ordained Deacon during year 1990 and we wish them every success in their work in their first parish and for the future.

Petertide 1990

Richard Biggerstaff
Stephen Hoyle
David Clues
Phillip Hamilton-Manon
Clive (Bill) Rogers

It has also been a good year for the sales promotion of Guild Neckties and good to see so many being worn at our Guild Festivals. We have had to make a slight increase in price from May 1st 1990 to £4 each, which was approved by the Council. Finally, on behalf of Fr Eric Ford and myself, once again our thanks for the support we received in our efforts to press forward the work of COF. For without your prayers and fund raising efforts, the work of COF would not be able to continue the high standard in the way it does at present, in the name of the Guild.

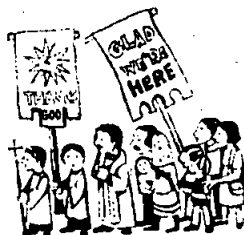
Eric Ford
Chaplain COF

Stan Wilcox
Secretary COF

FESTIVALS

North London Chapters Marian Festival

The annual North London Chapters Festival was held in honour of Our Lady at the church of the Holy Cross in Kings Cross London on the 16th May. Unfortunately due to his recent illness our Patron, The Bishop of Edmonton could not be with us, and his place was taken by another good friend and member of the Guild The Archdeacon of Hampstead, The Venerable Bob Coogan.



Once again the festival was enhanced with the help of the choir from S Barnabas, Woodford Green, who sang the Lourdes Gloria in Latin, the Vittoria Mass 'O Quam Gloriosum Regni', and the motet by Richard Parsons 'Ave Maria' with their usual excellence. It is very rewarding to have their support on these great occasions.

These occasions are becoming very friendly events in the life and worship of the Guild in this area, with the true meaning of Christ's family being commented on by visitors to the festival. Thank God we can show forth our love not only with our lips, but with our lives. This was one of those occasions!

Southern Area Servers Festival

A most successful Festival was held at Chichester on 22nd June when the Guild visited the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity after a lapse of some 20 years. At the Sung Eucharist, which was attended by about 150 servers and friends, the Lord Bishop of Chichester was the principal celebrant and also gave an inspiring address on the subject of commemorations in June, particularly S Alban whose feast was being observed that day. For the Guild Office, which was sung by Fr John Wren, chaplain of the chapter of S Wilfrid, Eastbourne, numbers attending were swelled to about 250. The address was given by the Right Revd Christopher Luxmoore, formerly Bishop of Bermuda and now Archdeacon of Lewes and Hastings. This was followed by a Procession to the shrine of S Richard, patron of Chichester, and concluded by Pontifical blessing. The Festival was organised by the Sussex chapters of S Wilfrid, Eastbourne, the Holy Resurrection, Brighton, S Phillip and S Richard, Worthing, and Our Lady and S Richard, Bognor, who were pleased to welcome priests and servers from both within the County and further afield and especially the Secretary General, other Councillors and a server from Lichfield. The Sussex Chapters much appreciate the assistance given by the Dean and Chapter and the Cathedral staff in making the day such a success. It is hoped that another Festival can be arranged in the not too distant future.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

1991 OCTOBER

12 AUTUMN FESTIVAL

Portsmouth Cathedral, Noon – Mass (Rite A)

Preacher: The Rt Revd Timothy Bavin, Bishop of Portsmouth

3.30 pm Guild Office



1992 JANUARY

11 Southwark Diocesan Servers Festival

Southwark Cathedral, Noon – Concelebrated Eucharist

Guild Office, Sermon & Procession – 3 pm

Preacher: Rt Revd Dom Giles Hill OSB, Abbot of Alton Abbey

"Bit more appropriate don't
you think Father?"

LaBarnum
~~HOLLY TREES~~
CREMATORIUM

THE
DEAD
CENTER

© I I ©



PREACHING GOOD NEWS FOR THE 90'S

John, Bishop of Gloucester

1 CORINTHIANS 9, verse 16 "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel".

Deep down, we all admire Billy Graham, and the Jehovah's Witnesses who come to our doors, and for that matter the man who preaches loudly to no-one in particular in the busy city centre of Gloucester on Saturday mornings. We admire them because they are not afraid to preach the gospel, and most of us are. Most of us want to belong to the Church and to serve it. We want to see the Church well regarded and successful, to grow in numbers and to be a dynamic fellowship. But we don't want to preach. Most ordinands and clergy, when asked what in their ministry is most difficult and frightening would reply 'preaching'. So, confronted with an imminent Decade of Evangelism we are re-assured when we are told that it does not just mean knocking on doors or having to preach.



Afraid of preaching

Why are we so fearful? One might be afraid of preaching because of the ferocious opposition it might arouse. But people are not going to stone us in the streets for proclaiming the gospel, or hawl us down in churches if we proclaim it from the pulpit. It is not exactly that we are afraid of making fools of ourselves. It is more that we are afraid of indifference, or of mild and kindly ridicule, we fear the tolerant disdain and rejection of those who simply find no need for what we would be offering them, no place in their world for God or the gospel, who manage very well thank you without worship or prayer and we would be intruding on their privacy if by evangelism we sought to disturb them. Many such people do want the Church. They want it (as we say) for marrying and burying, and often for Christening as well, but they do not want our preaching. Some of them may even be quite interested from time to time in what Bishops and other Church figures are reported as saying about this, that or the other. But not preaching. They may even value words of wise counsel from the vicar at difficult times in life, or comfort and consolation in moments of distress. And we, whether ordained or lay, are only too glad to be able to offer these boons of Christ to our neighbours, and in Church we who are preachers fall sometimes into the temptation of offering from the pulpit not the word of God which confronts and stirs and demands response, but rather the word of human beings even of sensible, wise and good human beings which helps, comforts and advises and perhaps leaves us with a practical word or two of moral uplift for our daily lives and if we are not preachers, that's what we want. Too often, our efforts whether as preachers or as hearers in Church merit the lash of that parody of a favourite hymn 'We love the pulpit best, for there the word of man, consoles the human breast, as only sermons can'. Or, as the great Congregationalist divine, P. T. Forsyth, described it 'the petty sentiment which from the pulpit rolls down upon the pew in a warm and soaking mist'.

Evangelism is about preaching

But when all is said and done, the Decade of Evangelism is about preaching the gospel and can hardly be about anything else. So what is to be our gospel to our world in the 1990's? First of all it is not to be our gospel at all, or at least only ours

by way of stewardship. It is the gospel of God—God's word of cheer to *his* world, not our word to our world. So we begin by seeing ourselves as messengers of a gospel we do not create. The gospel may call for skill in communication but it is not in itself a form of words we have invented. It is in the end a living word—the Word of God,—Jesus Christ himself no less. 'We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord'. As the philosophers of our youth used to say, the medium is the message; the gospel may be *in* the words we use, but the words are dead unless we are also in our own words as living messengers of the gospel.

No need for more training

So when we are afraid of preaching the gospel we tend to think that if only we had cleverer words, or more training in communication, or more scholarship in understanding, more discussion groups and bible study, then somehow by dint of all these ascetical exercises and intellectual gymnastics we would be effective preachers of the gospel. Not so. What we lack is not cleverness but the courage to throw ourselves into the gospel, to trust that we shall be seen to be ourselves, the word of life. Certainly it must help to grow in competence both in communication and in knowledge of our faith. But the real growth we require is in trust and obedience, in prayer and in worship. 'As I hear, so I speak'. We can only proclaim the gospel we possess ourselves and we only come into possession of the gospel insofar as we become ourselves possessed by it. Our message achieves clarity and confidence and power only insofar as our obedience and trust becomes deeper and clearer in our own lives. Remember how the Te Deum ends, 'In thee O Lord have I put my trust, let me never be put to confusion'. Not 'O Lord I have read many books and thought many thoughts, let me never be put to confusion'.

Personal experience

So the first question we have to ask is, are we sure the gospel is good news for us in our own lives; which is only another way of saying are we hearing the gospel as well and trying to preach it? And here we are, of course, ourselves creatures of our own time. We too share some of that disdainful tolerance of religious fervour which makes it so difficult for our neighbours to get het up about religion and Church. We too have doubts and uncertainties which we have not fully put to rest. We too are caught up in the rush and flurry of materialist greed and the quest for comfort and luxury. We too find the things of this world so enthralling that we find it hard to make time for eternity. And we shall not hear the good news unless we accept within ourselves these frailties and imperfections, and pray to God to bless us with the gospel which cuts through our confusions and uncertainties before we go preaching to others. And at this point it is so important not to be depressed about it or to think that we are somehow too humble and useless to be God's messengers and evangelists. If we believe, even imperfectly, that the gospel is the gospel of God, His Word to us of grace and salvation, we can cheer up and through repentance, renewal and re-dedication come to the truth that nothing depends upon us—it all depends on God. And he is faithful.

Receiving the gospel

Evangelism begins then with we who are Christians actually receiving the gospel. The gospel passes through us. Just as we receive it so we are channels of it for

those with whom we come in contact and not otherwise. The gospel is not like a deposit account at the bank, something you go on storing up within yourself until you have such a reassuring wealth within you that you are strong enough to go and disgorge it a little to others. Most of us are probably more effective preaching Christ through our weakness than out of our strength. Our stumbling phrases and incoherent attempts to speak about how God has been good news in our lives are probably more effective so long as they somehow point to Jesus Christ, than the polished words and impeccable orthodoxy of the golden tongued. And the gospel which we receive and transmit is good news in those areas of life which are basic and crucial for men and women to-day: I offer three examples—truth, hope and salvation.

Good news of truth

The gospel we receive and transmit is good news of truth. As Jesus revealed to those he met in the days of his flesh the truth about their own lives, exposing them to themselves so they could see themselves in the light of his truth, so the gospel reveals to us the truth about ourselves—truth which is sometimes uncomfortable and disconcerting but truth which, if we accept it, leads us to serenity and contentment with ourselves. This is the gospel and good news delivering us from the need to pretend to ourselves that we are better than we are. And so those who have accepted more truth about themselves in the light of Christ, can begin to reveal that truth about themselves to others without preaching down at them or pretending to be holier than thou. They can do it fearlessly, for those who have heard the gospel need never fear the truth. So, too, in a world which crucifies the truth at every turn, part of our gospel is to reverence the truth and serve it and to proclaim its liberating power to those who are enslaved in worlds of fantasy or distortion or propaganda, lies and deceitfulness, or even a dream-world of religious fantasy. And some of us who are called to study theology at whatever level, will find that it too is an agent of God's gospel of truth. Truly to study theology is not like studying how a machine works or the inner structure of a plant. Theology truly understood is the two-edged sword which pierces to the heart and marrow. It requires a re-thinking and re-ordering of one's life and intellectual world in the light of the truth which theology reveals. To quote P. T. Forsyth again "theology is like the wounds of Christ, graven on our heart and on the palms of our hands".

Good news of hope

In every way then, to accept and transmit truth which has come from Christ is to be an evangelist and a preacher of the gospel, then the gospel is God's word of hope. To those who hear the gospel all time is characterised by hope, and standing at the end of time is Christ waiting to greet us in mercy and love. The future is hope in the Lord—you don't always sense that even at the funerals of Church people! We can hardly then be preachers of the gospel if our own understanding of the future is hopelessly over-clouded by gloom and despair. If Christ has not liberated us from crippling fears about the future we shall have no gospel of hope to proclaim to others. So we should pray to Christ at the beginning of every day that we may live it in hope and at the end of the day seek his forgiveness which perpetually renews the future, delivering us from the burden of our sinful past. So we may go to greet our world every day seeing it as an adventure in hope, and before us in every

meeting and greeting, in every telephone call, and every visit to stranger or acquaintance Christ is before us and awaits us. So we may face life's end and experience ageing and dying as a voyage of life. So the gospel is God's word of hope to us and then through us to others and to the world that trembles in fear of war we preach Christ the hope of the world. Despite all terrors and through all sufferings, His purpose is being worked out, His kingdom inexorably comes. And to those whose lives are characterised less by fear and alarm than by boredom and futility—to people whose days and years are filled with activity that means nothing, who simply pass the time, we preach Christ in whose service the days and weeks brim over with purpose and meaning. So we preach to the world by what we say and how we live God's Word of hope. That, too, is the gospel and good news.

Good news of salvation

And thirdly, we receive the gospel as God's Word of salvation. Unless it is a word of salvation it is not the gospel of Christ. Salvation is final deliverance from those things which would otherwise destroy us. Not so much nowadays the demons and the principalities and powers, since those things are for most of us out of fashion. It is salvation from the fears, the hatreds, the futility and emptiness of life, the fiendish occupation with self, all of which will ultimately destroy us as human beings and children of God. It is easy enough to speak of salvation and sing of it in stirring hymns and songs. But we do not know the saving power of Christ unless we have also felt a touch of utter helplessness in the face of those enemies which we know can corrupt and destroy us. It is we who have experienced the inability to escape from ourselves into Christ, who have struggled with the recurrent sense of futility of just not knowing what it's all about, occasionally even not caring what it's all about. *We who have sniffed the distant fires of hell in moments of forsakenness or despair,* or disgust at ourselves and our own wickedness, and then have realised that these moments of peril and loss are the moment for faith. When we know that life is crucifying us and then realise that, not far away distant in glory, but on the next door cross, is the one who is suffering yet more than us and at the same time can rescue us from our fate. That is to know at least faintly what salvation is all about, and knowing that in our own lives can be channels of the gospel of salvation and good news to others.

The time is now

The Decade of Evangelism then calls us first of all to have faith in the gospel which woebetide us if we do not proclaim. And we are to have faith in it *now*. Not a year or two hence when we think we have trained ourselves sufficiently for it, but *now*. Not when we have worked out the right form of words and rehearsed all the possible arguments against the gospel which we might meet so that we cannot be vulnerable to opposition, but *now*. The time for faith and a time for the gospel is always now. It is in our weakness that God can proclaim His Word of power. It is in our trembling grasp of things that God can reveal to others his truth. It is in our trembling trust that God can reveal to others hope and confidence. Those of us who have always been afraid of preaching nevertheless somehow know that we can put the whole weight of the commitment we yearn for upon our weak and frail faith and it will support us, for Christ supports us. "For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel."

ABOUT GOD -(10)- "And in JESUS CHRIST" -(a)- The HEART of it all.

The Revd Canon W H Barnard

Plato once said, "The Maker and Father of the Universe is hard to find and when found impossible to tell of to all". Where Greek philosophy fails, Christianity declares "good news"; the Gospel, which is, that *God has done something*. Because of an event in history, called by theologians, the Incarnation, or literally "the enfleshment", God has revealed Himself so that we *can* find Him. If there has been no Incarnation, no "Word made flesh", there is no sure knowledge about God. *Christianity* is not a way of feeling or thinking about God but a *way of life*.

It is in the words of the Creed, "JESUS CHRIST", that we come to the *heart of the matter*. Note first there are 2 words. When we give a person more than one name it can be (a) to describe the same person, or (b) to distinguish one person from another, or (c) to give information about that person, e.g. you may say "That's Mr Brown the policeman" by way of explaining to your friend who it is that is coming to your front door without a policeman's uniform. When we say we believe in Jesus Christ, rather than use the one word "Jesus" or "Christ", it is because we are not merely mentioning His name but saying something about Him. When the first Apostles went out to preach the Christian religion these 2 words contained the *whole substance of their message*. They told their Jewish friends, "*Jesus is the Christ*", and their hearers knew what was meant. *Do we know?* If not, it is because we have not read much of the Old Testament.

So far in these articles, we have seen why "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth". God might have left it at that. It is all our unaided reason could tell us. What is going to help us then? *Revelation* is the answer. That's why having found out all we could about God by use of our unaided reason we look around to see if God has revealed Himself. This means going back over a bit of history; not just English history with Alfred and the cakes and so on, but a brief look at world history especially that of the Jews. That we will do next time.

S PAUL'S CATHEDRAL SERMON

Graham, Bishop of London 10.3.91

"During these last few weeks there has been pressed upon us as a people a succession of images from the Gulf, bewildering and confusing in their variety; images of victory and defeat, of hope and despair, of heroism and capitulation, of nobleness of character and of horrifying barbarities. Never before has a nation been made so aware of a war fought many miles away and made aware in a way which both increased the sense of distance and made us conscious of what it involved.

Our reactions are the more confused by the voices which say that to rejoice in the common mind of the United Nations to stand against naked aggression with its murders, torture and oppression is wrong because it implies a lack of concern for those who have suffered. Our consciences protest when it is said that because the motives of all of us are mixed or because of wrong decisions about Middle East policy which have been made in the past, we should rejoice at nothing today.

Bewildered by such voices we ask if we are simply to allow aggression to go unchallenged and to accept such barbarism uncondemned. As C.S. Lewis put it, do we want Hell to be able to veto Heaven?

What then should our thoughts be today, as human beings and as Christians. First, we must, I believe, pray for the gift of discernment, which enables us to distinguish between those things for which we rightly, dutifully and joyfully thank God and those things for which we should be penitent and ask forgiveness whether as individuals or as a nation. I say "as individuals or as a nation" for, while we may not personally be responsible for great decisions of policy, none of us simply lives to ourselves. The way in which each one of us lives affects the community as a whole. The making of judgements about a situation of conflict in any aspect of our common life must be accompanied by penitence for whatever in our lives has contributed to that conflict whether by way of resentment, bitterness, envy, aggression or moral indifference.

If we are to have true discernment, our eyes, our minds and our hearts must be directed towards the Cross of Christ. During his earthly life, Our Lord never shrank from speaking and living the truth about God and men, whatever the consequences. There is no trace of moral indifference in the way he lived. He recognized the nature and power of evil and upon the Cross allowed it to spend its full force upon himself. He knew that this was the only way in which he could defeat its power. By remaining faithful to God, holy and good, he broke its power and offers us forgiveness and a share in his victory. We hear much today about the need to be merciful but it is often forgotten that there must be judgment before there can be mercy. If there is no judgment, what passes for mercy is but moral indifference and condonation. On the Cross Our Lord both passed judgment on evil and bore the cost of our forgiveness.

In the reading we heard the story of the Transfiguration when it was made evident to Peter, James and John that the Cross was the only way to glory. It was, so we read in the Letter to the Hebrews, for the joy that was set before him that Our Lord endured the Cross.

Last October, preaching at the Service of the Victoria Cross and George Cross Association to mark the 50th Anniversary of the institution of the George Cross, I said that sacrifice is one strand of a thread which runs throughout the tapestry of human history—a thread which is both scarlet and gold, the scarlet of sacrifice and the gold of glory. You cannot have the one without the other. In every aspect of human life there are occasions when a lesser good has to be foregone for the best is to be achieved. It is possible to evade that truth by supposing that the best is not worth dying for and by remaining content with less than the best. G.K. Chesterton once said that, "courage means a strong desire to live taking the form of a willingness to die". The message of the Gulf War is that we had a strong desire for all mankind to live and would do all to achieve that end but that we could not accept life on Saddam Hussein's terms and were prepared to accept the cost of sacrifice to ensure that they did not prevail.

So, at this time, we rightly and joyfully give thanks to God for the fact that there was in the United Nations and in our Parliament a common mind and a common determination to resist that which was recognized as evil. We thank God that such a common mind led to action and that such action was successful.

We thank God for the calm, courageous and wise way in which the leaders of the countries in the coalition took such action.

We thank God for the determination, courage, co-operation and skill of the military leaders who had the responsibility for the allied action and of the troops who served.

We thank God that allied casualties have been light.

But we also pray for those who have in any way suffered as a result of the war, for those who have died and for those who have suffered injuries which will be life-long.

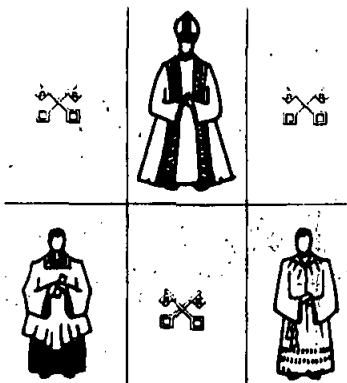
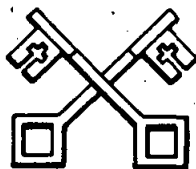
We pray for all who have been bereaved, especially on this Mothering Sunday for mothers who have lost their sons.

We pray for the people of Kuwait and Iraq and for all who have the responsibility for the rebuilding of those countries.

Finally we pray for ourselves that we may be delivered from covetousness, envy, bitterness, and moral indifference—those sins by which we contributed to conflict—and forgiven for past sins so that we show forth our praise not only with our lips but also in our lives by giving up ourselves to God's service and by walking before him in holiness and righteousness all our days".

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WHO'S WHO?

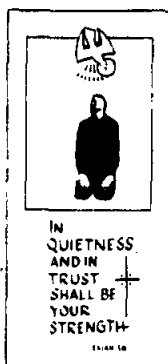
PG21 Cllr Andrew R Mays

Andrew is a native of Cheshire and has spent all his life in the Stockport area. He has been serving at the altar for the last 20 years and is currently a member of the S Werburgh chapter.

Andrew is assistant Sacristan and member of the PCC of S Mark's church Bredbury, his interest also lies with the art of campanology, being Ringing Master at his own church and assistant Librarian of the Chester Diocesan guild of church bell ringers.

PG22 Cllr Geoffrey R M Wippell

I was trained as a server and sacristan at S Paul's Burnthouse Lane, Exeter in 1942 by the late Geoffrey Ford and joined the chapter of S Peter in Exeter on admission in about 1943 and later became Guild Organist for the chapter. In 1944 I also became a server in Exeter Cathedral, and apart from National Service, remained in Exeter until 1958 when I was transferred to London. In London I was a server at Southwark Cathedral and senior server from 1960-1963 when I moved to Kent. In Kent I served at All Saints, Birchington, and became a member of the chapter of S Mildred in Thanet. When I became organist of All Saints, I kept up my serving connections on weekdays. I moved to Cornwall in 1976 and transferred to the chapter of S Michael and S Petroc, Newquay. As well as being organist of S Marwenne's Marhamchurch, I am the weekday server and also a sacristan. I was elected to the House of Laity of the General Synod, being one of the representatives for the Truro Diocese, and am Secretary of the Diocesan Branch of the Church Union and the Catholic Advisory Group.



PG2 FESTIVAL SERMON

Richard, Bishop of Dover 11.4.91

Romans 12: v.1

"I appeal to you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."

I am glad to be here with you and to be able to join in your Annual Guild Office and hear the Office sung so well.

I owe much to having been a server from the time of my Confirmation. Those of you who have observed my incompetence with a thurible and my uncertainty in ceremonial, will judge rightly that the church of my upbringing was not very high and that I never became a member of the GSS. Yet serving was important for me and I have tried to identify in what ways this was so.

Firstly it gave me something to do, and a sense of belonging, even a sense of importance.

Secondly it helped me to become regular in my church going.

Thirdly it provided a focus for my attention.

The value of all these things and their privileges in serving; is that we serve our Lord in the same way as did His two disciples who prepared the Upper Room for the Last Supper, or as Peter did when lending his boat. All three were serving the Lord by giving time and service.

Yet these have their compensating dangers to avoid—

The danger of becoming a sanctuary creeper, one who is only interested in ceremonial duties, and never giving any real time or thought to prayer. You can spot a sham server and they are not helpful to the worship of others. They become self important, not serving God but themselves, and often the danger sign of this is when servers only come to church when they are on duty, or expect to be robed and used on every occasion.

I am glad to say I have noticed the Cathedral Vergers who, when on duty, are always busy, having little time for prayer, come to the Cathedral when off duty to give time for prayer and worship.

Because of the very nature of Ceremonies, those taking an active part can be as easily distracted as they can be uplifted, if they do not focus their mind and thought upon the purpose of such ceremonies.

"What mean ye by this service?" is a question as relevant for a Server as for any Passover assembly.

Servers, therefore, need to be theologically aware and able to explain the religious significance of what they are doing.

So I have a plea to make, which is based on that text from St. Paul.

"I appeal to you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship"

"to present your bodies as a living sacrifice"

Serving is a form of self offering, and this cannot be done without conscious and prayerful preparation. Do not arrive just before the service begins: give yourself time to pray before you get busy. As you prepare the altar and the sanctuary, let your actions convey a sense of joy and humbleness, as you prepare for the Communion. Use arrow prayers as you do things, not as a rigmarole to mutter but as a direction from the heart.

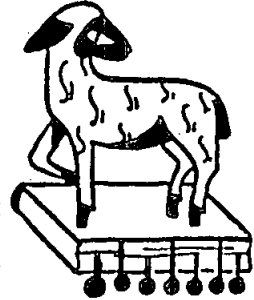
A sacrifice must be holy and acceptable, spiritually and physically. Be careful about your appearance; are your shoes clean; are your hands clean for presenting the bread and wine to the priest? Is your hair well groomed and tidy? Your physical appearance can draw unwanted attention to your self, and offend some who come to receive the Body and Blood of our Lord. It may even convey that you are indifferent to the great privilege you have in serving at the Lord's Table.

Serving is not just doing things—it is also a time for spiritual worship. Do you expect to grow in holiness; to renew your habits of prayer and worship; to renew your rule of life? Have you a spiritual director, someone on whom you can draw for spiritual guidance? Do you expect to be challenged by what you hear or feel in your heart, and let your religion be the centre of your life.

"I beseech you therefore....to be holy and acceptable to God" Before these words Paul had been writing about the people of Israel, a people who had the calling of God, but had lost their way through disobedience, and had become unacceptable to God through not presenting their bodies and service to Him in a holy and spiritual way. He does not want you to suffer the same fate.

SOME OF MY FAVOURITE THINGS

One of the aspects of the Old Testament that appeals to me is the development of ideas about God. People's ideas about God are not static (think of your growth as a Christian), and this is reflected in the literature of the Old Testament. In this article I want to examine the attitude of Ancient Israel towards idolatry and other gods. In this area, as in other areas, Israel grew and developed and so shaped the understanding of the New Testament, and thus the understanding of the Church. My principal texts are Isaiah 44: 9-20 and the Wisdom of Solomon ch. 13-14 (I have always had a fondness for satire and I think you will agree that in these passages there are some superb examples of biblical satire).



From the earliest times Israel was forbidden to worship other gods (e.g Exodus 20:3; 22:20). Yahweh is a jealous God who brooks no rivals (Exodus 20:5) and indeed so marvellous were His acts that Israel could not conceive of him having any serious rival. He created the universe by Himself (Genesis 2:4-25; Isaiah 40:12ff; Job 28:23-27; Proverbs 30:4 and so on); He had no pantheon, no consort (there is no Hebrew word for "goddess"), no progeny. Yahweh was surrounded by His heavenly host, His "Holy ones" (Psalm 83; Deuteronomy 33:2; Isaiah 6; I Kings 22 etc.) and though there were occasions when Israel was tempted to worship these beings, censure by the prophets was never lacking (II Kings 21: 3-5 c/f II Kings 21:2 and Zephaniah 1:5).

Early Israel did not exactly deny that there were other gods (Exodus 18:11; Judges 11:24; I Samuel 26:29) indeed their existence is naively assumed, but, neither was their status readily granted. To Israel, only one God was GOD; the other gods originated from within creation. Israel's God was outside His creation (re-read Isaiah 40:12) and was therefore above His creation. The understanding that these gods were deprived of a role in creation and were seen to have no function to order history and the affairs of mankind rendered them as nonentities, they were, in effect, undeified.

The most shattering experience of Ancient Israel was the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of its citizenry into exile in Babylon in 587 BC. For not only did it appear that Yahweh was unable to protect his people against the followers of other gods, these very gods were seen as being victorious in battle....where now was the idea that Yahweh was 'a man of war'? In addition, Israel was brought face to face with developed religious systems that kept alive civilisations more advanced than herself. Clearly some hard theological thinking had to be done (no bad thing in that day and age as in any other including very much our own!).

The two great prophets of this period were Ezekiel and the writer of the chapters 40–56 of the Book of Isaiah. Sad to say we do not know who this spiritual and theological giant was but his influence is clear in all books of the Bible which were written after him. Both these prophets staked their reputations on their commitment that Yahweh was truly God and the exile was due to sin and the wickedness of Jerusalem and that in time Jerusalem would be restored. In 516 Cyrus of Persia permitted the exiles to return. The unknown prophet is known as Deutero-Isaiah (Deutero = second) and I will refer to him as D-I. It was he who saw that Jerusalem was being punished for its sins and was acting in accordance with what had been spoken by the prophets, e.g. Jeremiah, and therefore Yahweh was still Lord of History. In this he is joined by Ezekiel who wrote a generation earlier, both agreeing that in time the exiles would return. Why? Because, as Ezekiel puts it, 'that they (or you) may know that I am the Lord.' But it was D-I who had most to say about the futility of idols.

Isaiah 44: 9–20 you could call a satirical tract on the folly of manufacturing and worshipping idols. The comic side of idol manufacturing is worked out in considerable detail, not to make us indignant but to laugh at the way the artist is so engrossed in his work that he forgets to eat and drink and so becomes exhausted, and how he uses half of the wood for baking and roasting and makes the rest into a god. Jeremiah some 70 years before had written in a similar vein (10:1–9)...one need not be afraid of a piece of wood, cut in a forest and artistically worked by men. These images even have to be fastened with nails so that they do not wobble; they have to be carried because they do not walk.

The Wisdom of Solomon (written in Alexandria circa 250 BC) is far more subtle than D-I in attacking idol worship. Certainly there is the folly of a sailor who worships a piece of wood which is far more fragile than his ship but the writer is far broader in his attack. There are, first of all those who consider the elements—fire, wind, water or the stars to be gods, either because they are influenced by their beauty or by terror of them. They cannot be excused for they ought to have recognised the Creator in what he created (c/f Romans 1: 18ff), (yet he will concede in their favour that they are searching for God and wish to find him (13: 1–9).

However, quite beyond comprehension is the behaviour of those who worship images made by men, that is, something lifeless (13: 10–19). The motives which caused the artists to construct such works are queried...a striving after gain (14: 2; 15:12) or ambition (14:18). He speaks of the custom of parents having a statue erected to a recently deceased child and ending up worshipping it!! (14:15f). Not as unlikely as you might think; Cicero raised his dead daughter Tullia to the status of 'protective hero'. Or else, perhaps the image of a ruler was set up and was then worshipped as a god by those who had never seen the ruler in the flesh (14:16f).

The true greatness of the unknown writer of the Wisdom of Solomon is that he sees all idol worship as the root of all moral degeneracy...since images do not have the status of gods, they are incapable of keeping men in the true fear of God (14: 12, 23–31). This argument is taken up and developed by S Paul in his letter to the Romans (1: 18–end).

One of the interesting aspects about the prophetic denouncing of idols is that not once is reference made to the prohibition of images in the ten Commandments

(Exodus 20: 4f) when images are put on a par with murder, adultery or theft. I would say in answer to this obvious question that the texts quoted are the practical out-working of Israel's understanding of its relationship with Yahweh. From its very earliest understanding of Yahweh, limited though that was, there was the understanding that Yahweh transcends the world and that it was impossible to give any image of such a transcendent God without limiting and localising the God who had revealed Himself to Israel. The argument that the worship of images is foolish because the Creator can be recognised in the creation which He has created is nowhere so explicit as in the Wisdom of Solomon (13: 1-9). For Israel the erection of an image of God made out of the elements of creation was real folly. With this conception of the relationship of God to the world, Israel definitively separated herself from the cults of the surrounding nations.

To think about

What sort of 'idols' does society worship today?

Do you see the problems of the world connected to the type of 'god' worshipped?

What, if any, are the dangers of religious statues in our churches?

What, if any, are the advantages of statues in our churches?

I have tried to show that there was a development of thought within the Old Testament. Each writer developed what had gone before. In my next article I am going to write on the concept of the sacred war in the Old Testament (perhaps you might like to research the bible yourself beforehand). What I finally want to say is that our understanding of Yahweh's love for us as revealed in Jesus Christ must grow and develop as we experience more and more the wonder of Worship and its application to life.

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GLASTONBURY PILGRIMAGE SERMON

Colin, Bishop of Winchester 29.6.91

God who made Peter an Apostle to the Jews, also made Paul an Apostle to the Gentiles. (Galatians 2.8)



It is good to be here in Glastonbury once again. We come as fellow pilgrims from dioceses and parishes, far and near. We have made this journey as an act of faith and to deepen our devotion. For centuries pilgrims have felt move to set out and to join their fellow Christians in worship at a holy place. The journey itself is significant; an enacted parable of our own life long journey and venture of faith. Created and called by God, incorporated in Christ in our baptism, sustained and renewed by Our Lord in the Eucharist, we travel in faith and hope. Responding to His love in worship, trying by grace to serve Him in the needs of others and to work in the service of His Kingdom, we are seekers and searchers. We look for a city, a destination, where we shall see God and know Him as He is, love and enjoy Him in the perfection of His being. Pilgrimage is a holy thing. We belong to God's holy people. And we have come to a holy place.

A thousand years ago three men, personal friends, under God renewed and reformed the Church in England. Dunstan of Glastonbury and Canterbury, Ethelwold of Winchester, Oswald of Worcester and York. Men of prayer, of learning and culture, and practical ability, they revived the monastic life. They quickened the spiritual life of the nation and inspired an artistic, architectural and cultural renaissance.

So it is a great personal joy to retrace the steps of Ethelwold from Winchester to Glastonbury, to join in the offering of the Eucharist in this historic shrine making prayer to God for our renewal and the renewal of His Church in the power of the Holy Spirit. And in this offering our prayers are linked with those who lived holy lives, and worked and worshipped here in centuries past.

Our pilgrimage is dedicated to S Peter and S Paul, whose Festival we celebrated today.

The ancient priory Church in Winchester which Ethelwold revived, and its successor Winchester Cathedral and the See of Winchester have as their arms the keys of S Peter crossed with the Sword of the Spirit of S Paul: And I have this emblem engraved on my bishop's ring: The keys and the sword:

In the Gospel we have heard Simon Peter confess the faith—'You are the Christ'. And the Lord replies 'You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church'. There is a pun on the words Cephass—and Cepha the rock; Petros and Petra.

We remember the Lord telling of the wise man who builds his house on the rock, and when the rain and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon it—the house did not fall; it was rock solid; withstanding everything the elements could hurl at it.

Will Peter be rock-solid? Well, within minutes he is showing he knows better than His Lord. This talk of going to Jerusalem, suffering many things from the Jewish

leaders, being put to death, and raised on the third day; appals him. 'God, forbid, Lord. This shall never happen to you'. 'Get thee behind me Satan'—is the stern rebuke.

Peter is wrong. The Lord can only save others by not saving himself. The world does its worst—betrayal, injustice, rejection, pain and death—all the elements of evil are hurled against Him. He withstands them. He does not crack. He overcomes that evil with a love that suffers and is undefeated. He breaks the power of death.

His death and resurrection are the true rock foundation of the Church—He builds. And the gates of the underworld, the powers of death cannot overcome it. The gates of death cannot clang shut to imprison the members of this new Israel, the Church of God.

The Church on earth suffers and struggles. Sometimes it faces persecution and hardship; and when that happens it is very close to Our Lord. Those who share in his suffering have his promise that they will share too in his resurrection.

But the Church suffers also when it is feeble and faint hearted, or arrogant and complacent; it suffers when it ceases to attempt great things for God and forgets its calling; suffers when it pulls down the shutters and remains impervious to the world's needs. Yet even so, the Lord keeps faith with the Church. He will not abandon or let it go. In his mercy he will preserve and renew it.

The Church struggles today amid so much apathy and indifference in our society. We seek to witness to the Catholic faith in a culture that largely believes the Christian message to be either irrelevant or untrue. In the Decade of Evangelism the Church needs to be renewed by the Spirit in all its members, so that we may live and testify to the love of Christ reaching out across all barriers to our contemporaries, bringing hope and purpose and meaning to their lives; so they may be open to the invasion of God's love and be responsive, finding new life in Christ.

Our Lord entrusted the keys of the kingdom to Peter, the foremost of the Apostles, the first witness to the resurrection, and the first head of the Church in Jerusalem; the leader of the Mission to the Jewish people. Peter the rock, Peter the pastor, Peter the key-bearer. The keys symbolize his authority as a preacher and teacher unlocking the treasures of the Gospel. The keys express the authority the Lord gives to His Church—and to Peter as the servant leader—to welcome and forgive the penitent sinner, to admit or refuse entry to the Kingdom. The purpose of Christ's coming, the outcome of his death and resurrection, is to reconcile, to heal, to forgive, to renew, to offer new life. It is that saving purpose the Church on earth exists to serve; it is that reality—of forgiveness—reconciliation—new life which the keys of the Kingdom express.

The keys admit to the new life in Christ, and to the service of the Kingdom.

And the *Sword of the Spirit*, of which St Paul speaks, is part of the whole armour of God, so we may be strong in the Lord's service. The decisive victory has been won by Christ; the powers of evil and death defeated. In our baptism we share in that victory. As Christ's faithful soldiers and servants we are enlisted to fight under Christ's banner; to continue and complete the struggle against all that is opposed to God's will. The fight is not against other human beings; but against sin, the world and the devil, those forces which enslave and oppress men, which frustrate and

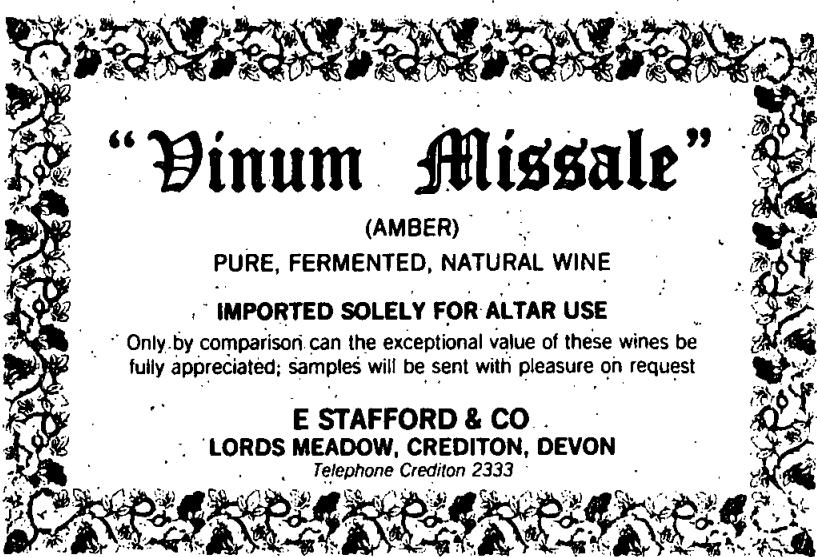
demean our human nature. So the struggle is to extend and make available to others the victory and the new life of Christ; to communicate the Gospel of peace that comes from that victory, so that people may find freedom and fulfilment in Christ.

The helmet of Salvation protects the Christian from the enemy. The Sword of the Spirit is the weapon of attack—to speak the words He gives us, which, disarm and repel His enemies. In time of crisis Jesus says—it is not our words that count—but the Holy Spirit gives us what to say. The Sword of the Spirit is the word that comes from God; the positive presentation of the message of Christ. So we use the opportunities to communicate by what we are, what we do, what we say, the message of Christ, the aliveness of the Christ of today present and at work among us.

The Sword of the Spirit is also the weapon of prayer. The Spirit within us pleads for us and pleads for God's own people in God's own way. The Spirit within us prays that we may have strength and power; and that Christ may dwell in our hearts. As Christ takes possession of us so we are equipped to work in the service of His Kingdom. That is the Spirit's work within us and through us, reaching out to others.

Peter the Apostle to the Jews; Paul to the Gentiles; both called by Christ as leaders in Mission. Both bore witness in their preaching and in the shedding of their blood. As we celebrate this Eucharist we are at one in Christ and with these two Apostles and all those who have witnessed to the faith. Pray that we maybe faithful in this new decade of mission and evangelism.

Hold in our mind's eye—the Keys of the Kingdom; which unlock the door and admit, to the new and abundant life in Christ; and the sword of the Spirit—that the words he gives us may communicate the presence and aliveness of Christ today to heal, to reconcile and to save.



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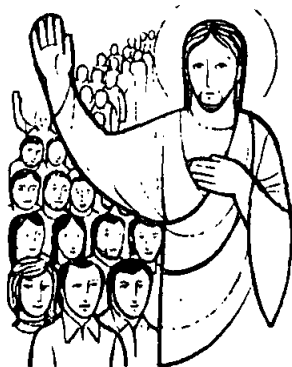
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NEWS FROM THE CHAPTERS

S BARNABAS, Blackburn

Our 70th anniversary celebrations started in fine style with a Solemn Mass for the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday 2nd February in the beautiful Cathedral church of our Diocese. We were delighted to welcome a coach party of servers and friends from the Shrewsbury chapter and honoured to have Bp Jack Nicholls of Lancaster as our preacher. After our AGM the day concluded with the Guild Office. We were most grateful to the Provost and Cathedral Chapter for hosting us on this occasion.



Our April meeting took us to S Peter, Accrington for the first time since 1961 and to a traditional East Lancs welcome. Sadly, the sun failed to shine on us for our outdoor celebration of the Mass for the Feast of S Barnabas. It was so wet that we had to use Whally parish church, rather than the glorious setting of the Abbey ruins. Our spirits were not dampened however and we all enjoyed a stimulating sermon from the Archdeacon of Lancaster. Teas was provided for well over 100 people in the Diocesan Conference house. September 29th will see us at S Paul, Addington, the home parish of our chaplain, Fr Morgan. The Bp of Blackburn will be our preacher at the Guild Office. Numbers of the chapter continue to grow, in spite of the long distances members have to travel to meetings.

S BIRINUS, Oxford

The Office was sung during the months of April to June in the churches of: S Andrew, Old Headington, Oxford; S James the Great, Radley; and the parish church—S Peter & S Paul, Deddington, with Benediction by our chaplain Fr Denis Mason. There were social gatherings afterwards.

We were also invited to a Guild Office with members of the Guild who are preparing for the Sacred Ministry at S Stephen's House, Oxford. The Office was sung in the church of S John the Evangelist which forms part of S Stephen's House by our chaplain, a member of the House, and the Vice-Principal gave an address, using as his text the antiphon from the office "Samuel ministered unto the Lord, girded in a linen ephod". We concluded with Benediction.

A coach party attended the Glastonbury Abbey Pilgrimage.

S CHAD, Coventry

It was almost fourteen years since we last visited S George, Coundon, where the April Meeting was held. The vicar, Fr Martin Grieg, welcomed us and the chaplain, Fr Graeme Hands, presided for the Eucharist assisted by Bro Nigel Makepeace. Fr Hands also gave a short address.

In mid-May we went to S Mary and S John, Camp Hill, Nuneaton, for the Office at which the chaplain officiated. The vicar, Canon Dennis Sneath, a long time member of the Guild, preached and, following the procession, presided at Benediction. It was pleasing to be joined by the new vicar of S John Baptist, Wolvey, Fr Ray James supporting his servers, many of whom are members.

Sadly these days we have no representative in the Rugby district, but it was pleasant to go over to S Oswald, New Bilton, in June for the Office with the deputy

chaplain Fr Wilf Poultney officiating. The vicar Fr John Randall preached.

We were sorry to have to say farewell to Secretary Bro Ian Yeo who left the Cathedral to become Verger at S Mary Abbots, Kensington. He was succeeded by our Organist Bro Tim Campaign combining the two duties for the time being.

S ETHELDREDA, Cambridge

There are not many chapters who can claim that they have been escorted to their Guild Office by armed men! Probably not many would care to!

Our chapter visited Royal Air Force, Wyton for their April Guild Office where, in the aftermath of the Gulf War, security was very tight. The Station Chaplain and his staff made us all very welcome and it was heartening that Simon Falla, Adrian Petty and Adam Greenley from Buckden were admitted as probationer members and Helen, Jonathan and Martin Claridge were enrolled as full members.

Father Weston of Royal Air Force, Wyton preached memorably and we thoroughly enjoyed our evening.

On May Day Bank Holiday the Diocese of Ely held an 'All Aboard Day' where Church organisations could have stalls and exhibitions. The chapter manned a stall all day and received many enquiries about our work and made many useful contacts with churches which we have not yet visited in our monthly programme.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD, Derby

The Derby chapter was joined by members from other parts of the Diocese when the Guild Office was sung in Derby Cathedral on 4 May.

Fr Donald McDonald, the chaplain, officiated. Members were welcomed to the Cathedral by Derek Limer, on behalf of the Cathedral servers, and by Canon Ian Gatford, on behalf of the Provost and Chapter. Following the service which took place in the Retro-choir, members were entertained to tea in the Chapter room by the Cathedral staff.

S HUGH & BLESSED EDWARD KING, Great Grimsby

Our first meeting of the New Year was held at S Andrew & S Luke, Grimsby. Our chaplain, Fr Malcolm King OGS, officiated and the address was given by the Rev Wendy Isam, a member and Deacon in charge of S Andrew & S Luke.

In February we visited S Matthias, Fairfield, Grimsby for the Guild Office at which the vicar, Fr David Rowett, gave the address. Bro Matthew Fox was admitted to full membership at this meeting.

In March we made our first country visit to All Saints, Goxhill, Fr Peter Webster gave the address. April took us to S Mary & S Gabriel, Binbrook, where Fr Ernest Brown, a Priest Associate, officiated and Fr Trevor Walker, the rector, gave the address. Bro Richard Precious was admitted as a probationer. Three of our members attended the Easter Festival.

In May we visited S Peter, Scotter, for Guild Office and Benediction. We were welcomed by Fr Ray Watts, NSM attached to Scotter, also present was the Ven Stephen Oliver, Archdeacon of Capetown, in an exchange visit with Fr Bird. On 6th June several of our chapter and one of the Boston chapter attended a Votive Mass of Christ the King at S Augustine, Grimsby to mark the 50th anniversary in the priesthood of Canon John Brumpton, former rector of Barnsley. Mass was celebrated in the presence of four Bishops, the Bishops of Grimsby, Pontefract;

Wakefield and Winchester. This was a wonderfully memorable occasion, two of our members, Bros John Norton and Matthew Fox, assisted in the serving.

In June we went to S Mary, Barton upon Humber for Guild Office. Fr Brown officiated and gave the address and Fr Ernest Hepworth, vicar of Barton, led the intercessions. We were also pleased to welcome at this meeting Bro Donald Knappe, secretary of the Hull chapter.

S MARK, W Cornwall

The chapter Festival Mass and Procession was held at All Saints, Tuckingmill. The celebrant was Fr F Sutcliffe (chaplain), Preb J Vincent vicar of Bude preached and Fr Ben Luck (vicar) read the Gospel.

May Devotions at St Day parish church were taken at the Cornish Walsingham Shrine by Fr Paul Foot who preached and celebrated Holy Benediction.

A special service to celebrate Corpus Christi was held at S John, Treslothan, celebrated by our chaplain Fr F Sutcliffe who is also vicar. Fr C MacDonnell preached. The Host was carried in outdoor Procession, followed by Benediction.

The chapter went by coach to the Glastonbury Pilgrimage, when servers and friends from many parishes took part and supplied some torch bearers for Evensong.

In July servers and friends went to Veryan parish church to sing the Guild Office. Fr M Geach preached. After tea we had an evening coach trip to St Mawes.

SS OSMUND & SWITHUN, Bournemouth & Poole

The chapter is pleased to report that Bro Kevin Northover was ordained on Sunday June 30th in York Minster by John, Archbishop of York, to serve his title at S Alban, Kingston upon Hull. He was trained at Mirfield. We had a very successful coach outing to Bickleigh Mill, nr Tiverton in Devon. We can thoroughly recommend this to other chapters.

S OSYTH, mid-Bucks

On Saturday 20th April the chapter visited S John the Baptist, The Lee, where we were warmly welcomed to sing the Guild Office. Our deputy chaplain, Fr Michael Staines, officiated, and three Probationers, Susan Fellows, John Hall, and Malcolm Rickard, were admitted. The preacher was the rector of The Lee, Fr George De Burgh-Thomas. His address on the standards required from Servers was much appreciated. The beautiful church of 1910 stands in the same churchyard as the tiny medieval church—both churches loved and cherished.

S STEPHEN, Tunbridge Wells

The Annual Dinner of the chapter took place in the S Barnabas church hall on Sunday evening 7th April.

Some 30 servers and members of the congregation attended.

Mr Christopher Everett, late Headmaster of Tonbridge School was the guest speaker. In a most entertaining talk he spoke of his experiences as diplomat in America, the Middle East and his work in Japan, also of his experiences as Headmaster at Tonbridge School. It did indeed make some of us think how small a world we personally live in.

The loyal toast was proposed by our new church warden Mr David Russell and the toast "Good Food, Good Company and Good Intentions" was proposed by Fr

26

Michael Nicholls, our parish priest at S Barnabas. The toast to the chapter was proposed by the secretary who spoke of the few servers who were now employed in this area due to the change of type of service held in local churches, although fortunately the numbers of servers has increased in other parts of the country.

An excellent repast consisting of Steak and Kidney Pie, New Potatoes, Carrots and Peas, followed by Gateau, Biscuits and Cheese and Coffee was provided by the ladies to whom our grateful thanks were extended.

It would appear that an enjoyable evening was had by all and has in fact been described at the "best ever".

Our sincere thanks to Fr Micheal for all the work he put in to organise this event.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

4 Chapman Close
Melbourne
Royston
Herts. SG8 6AH

Dear Editor,

As reported elsewhere our chapter had a stall at our Diocesan 'All Aboard Day' where we were able to exhibit our work and talk to interested people about our programme.

It is sad to report that one good 'Catholic' priest, when asked if he and his young servers would be interested in joining our chapter replied that whilst he thought we did good work nevertheless he would not want his young people to be subjected to 'that dirge of a Guild Office' because he felt that it was the quickest way of driving young people away. 'Why?' he asked, 'did we not devise a more modern form of Guild Office which would attract the younger people.'

This particular priest does good work on a modern housing estate where the younger people are a main cause of concern and I am sure that he knows them better than most of our members.

This is not the first time that the charge of dullness has been levelled against us by prospective members. I understand that there are certain chapters who are, despite 'official' denials, devising their own form of the Guild Office. Surely it would be a good ideal for the Guild to recognise that there is a need and to act before we have chapters all going their own way and we are faced with a plethora of Offices all differing from each other.

And before I face the inevitable wrath of those who do not want to change at any price I have to say that I am a grey haired grandfather, I am not into 'heavy metal' and I love the present Guild Office but recognise that some changes may be necessary.

Colin Lemming

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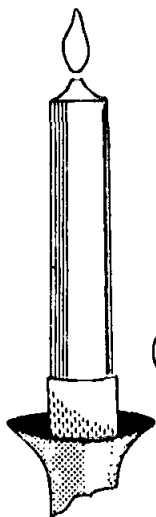
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