

The Rector's Letter

April 1968

My Dear Friends,

It is worth while remembering that Lent stems only from Easter and we must understand its meaning first. Easter is the great Festival when new life was given to the world and the occasion in the early Church when new members were admitted by Baptism. Perhaps we ought to think in terms of a Parish Baptism on Easter Eve when the children can literally be received "into the Congregation of Christ's flock", and we, as that congregation, are all present to take part and do the receiving and welcoming.

The following story is helpful, I think, and revealing: a small girl suffering painful treatment for a severe physical handicap was consoled by her mother - "We will ask Jesus to help you bear it when we talk to Him tonight". The rebuke was immediate: "Mummy, I can't wait. Do it now". Children are naturally existentialists. They live in the here and now and the Christian faith is only of interest to them if it can be shown to be of practical relevance to their daily lives. That is one of our jobs.

Yours sincerely,

Allan Campbell.

The Bishop's Letter

My Dear Friends,

This is a month in which many Confirmations take place. What happens to our younger candidates after they are confirmed? The answer is quite clear and it can be put most plainly in figures. The number of confirmed members of the Church of England is about nine million; the number of communicants at Easter is a little over two million, and some of these communicate only once or twice a year. Less than a quarter of those confirmed become steady practising and active members of the Church in later life. Every parish priest knows the bitter disappointment of seeing young confirmed people who just give up altogether soon after confirmation. There is no one complete answer to this problem, which is now occupying the minds of many responsible people in the Church. I want to suggest, however, that there is one factor in the situation to which we can all contribute.

Young people are very sensitive to atmosphere. They know at once if their presence is not welcome or if the attitude of others towards them is distant or cold or suspicious. They want, (like all of us, only

it matters more when you are young) to be wanted and not rejected. When they are confirmed they are bold that they are now coming into the full life of the Church as responsible members of it. Sometimes they find that there is very little to give them a sense of welcome or of belonging or of having any real place in the "family of Christ" into which they have now fully come. Perhaps we ought to ask more often not only whether the confirmation candidates are worthy to come into the congregation, but also whether the congregation, by the quality of its corporate life, is worthy to have new members.

Every congregation ought to have an annual review of what is happening to its young people. It is not so much a question of what it is doing for them; it is more a matter of how it is bringing them into its life, what it is giving them to do, how it is inviting them to take responsibility. I do not say that this would achieve surprising results, but whatever its results, it is something we ought to look for as Christ's people, as the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, whose gift is love. Is this what our younger members find us to be?

To bring young people more fully into the life of the Church may mean some self-sacrifice on the part of the older members. There are offices to be held and jobs to be done and sometimes those who have been doing particular things in the parish for a long time go on. clinging to them without asking the question whether it is not time to let another take a turn. Sometimes, but not always, the answer is that there is no-one at present to take on this particular office or piece of work. But sometimes the answer would be that a younger man or woman is available to take on this work and could do it well. When this is so, let us see that the younger people are given the opportunity. If the young adolescents see that men and women in their twenties and thirties are taking an active and responsible part in parish life, it will encourage them to grow up and grow into active membership themselves.

I sometimes tell the candidates at Confirmations that they will find a real family spirit in Church Life. I sincerely believe that such a spirit has been growing in many of our parishes and I rejoice to see it. But perhaps we have not yet thought through all its practical implications. A little corporate self-examination An this point in Lent might be a useful operation.

Your sincere friend and Bishop,

Harry Oxon.

SERVICES

Services for Good Friday and Easter are shewn on the back page.

There will be a Confirmation Service at St. Mary's by the Bishop of Buckingham at 6p.m. on Sunday, 31st March when, with others, Sarah Pusey and Yendy Weller will be confirmed.

EASTER FLOWERS

The Church will be decorated for Easter on Saturday, 13th April beginning at 10a.m. when the help of as many volunteers as possible will be appreciated. Flowers and greenery should be brought to the Church by 9.30a.m. that day if possible. Those who prefer to give a small donation are asked to let Miss Boston or Miss Williams know a week previously so that the appropriate order can be placed. As arum lilies are so expensive, they will only be ordered by special request.

Flower Rota for the rest of April:

April 21 Miss Boston

April 28 Mrs. Waite

THE NEW HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE

A special service at which the new experimental Service of Holy Communion was used was held at St. Mary's on Wednesday 21st February for a congregation composed largely of the committees of St. Mary's and All Saints, Coleshill.

At their meeting on Monday, April 8th, the Parochial Church Council will decide on its use or otherwise in the Parish.

PROPOSED DIVISION OF THE DIOCESE

At their meeting on Saturday, March 2nd the Amersham Ruri-decanal Conference voted overwhelmingly for the implementation of the recommendation - put forward unanimously by the Archbishop's Commission on the re-organisation by dioceses in London and the South East - that the Diocese of Oxford be split into three Dioceses, those of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire.

REPORT OF THE P.C.C. FOR THE YEAR 1967/8 (abridged)

When the last annual report was presented, it was hoped that an early date might be fixed for the dedication of the Drake Memorial Chapel. The Chapel was, in fact, dedicated by the Bishop of Oxford on 18th April 1967 at a private service attended by 18 members of the Drake family

At the Parish Church, the year has seen continuing work on the restoration of the building. The room over the organ was found to be suffering from dry rot and wet rot and repairs had to be put in hand urgently,

the organ itself being out of commission for many weeks.

It is, unfortunately, not possible to report any real progress in the matter of the transfer of the Winchmore Hill Mission Church, though the Council hopes for some sign of the unravelling of this complicated legal tangle before much further time has elapsed.

During the year, representatives of the Council, as Trustees of St. Michael's Trust have had a number of discussions with members of St. Michael's P.C.C. concerning a possible variation of the Trust to broaden its terms.

While the accounts of St. Mary's and All Saints show a not unsatisfactory position for the year, it cannot be overlooked that the sharp increase in the Diocesan quota has placed a real burden on the Churches. Criticism of the manner in which the increase had been introduced was voiced at meetings of the Ruri-decanal Conference, where it was found that the views expressed by Amersham's representatives were shared by those from other parishes.

ASH WEDNESDAY 1968

I was glad to find myself within my own parish this year on this day and even more so afterwards.

The programme introducing Joan Stuart Anderson and his rendering of stories from the Bible gave indication of an unusual form of marking the close of the day and much appreciation is due to those instrumental in bringing this monodrama to the Parish Church of St. Mary.

Sincerity through simplicity in form, movement, declamation and setting, on platform and within the Church itself was the keynote throughout; no fussiness in seating, lighting nor unnecessary words of introduction.

The setting, costume and clear uncluttered speaking brought the stories compellingly before one; movement was slight but definite and most effective as was that of the hands when they were used. For me, the first part of the programme was the more outstanding if comparison may be drawn. I liked the costume and indeed the content better. But throughout the well-filled Church, the concentration of the whole, including the two small boys seated in the aisle, gave evidence of the value felt for these interpretations.

The ability of one man to hold his audience thus was clear and one felt sorry not to express appreciation in the usual way and, of course, the only way an audience can. Maybe evidence of this was felt without sound or sign. We sincerely hope so and would thank Mr. Campbell for making this presentation possible and for including the parish of Coleshill in the congregation.

H. C. McL.

CURACY

Several potential curates have been to visit Coleshill but no immediate appointment is envisaged.

WOMEN'S DAY OF PRAYER

The collection at the Coleshill service, held in the Baptist Chapel on March 1st, in connection with the Women's Day of Prayer, amounted to £6. 9. 3d. and is to be used to help the distribution of the Scriptures and Christian Literature throughout the world and to further the work of the Women's Day of Prayer.

MR. CYRIL SAUNDERS

We are sorry that Mr. Saunders has had to return to hospital for a further operation. He can be assured of our prayers and good wishes.

THANKS

The babies of Magila Hospital send many thanks both to those who have so generously kept the Coleshill blanket factory in production and to those who gave Green Shield Stamps, from the proceeds of which baby scales were bought.

SCHOOL WHIST DRIVE

The annual Whist Drive held at Coleshill School on March 6th was very successful and the two first prizes were won by Mrs. L.W. Parker and Mrs. W.A. Lawrence, playing as a gentleman. Mr. Jim Ware was the M.C. for a very enjoyable evening which resulted in a profit of £17.14.6d. for the school funds.

BRIDGE DRIVE

The Coleshill Village Hall Committee is pleased to announce that Mrs. Tytherleigh, who has considerable experience with functions of this nature, has consented to act as M.C. at the Bridge Drive on April 19th. The same pairs will remain in partnership throughout the evening and will meet other pairs in much the same fashion as at Whist Drives.

VILLAGE HALL A.G.M.

The Committee invites all people who use the hall, however occasionally, to attend the Annual General Meeting to be held in the hall at 8.15p.m. on Wednesday, April 17th.

Tickets for the Bridge Drive can be obtained from Mrs. Browne, Mrs. Ovington or any member of the Committee.

CHURCH FETE

As previously announced, by kind invitation of Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Pusey, the Church Fete this year will be held at Little Bowers, Magpie Lane, on Saturday, June 8th.

A meeting will be held at Orchard House, Coleshill at 8p.m. on Thursday, March 28th and anyone who is willing to assist will be welcome.

EASTER EGGS

In the medieval church, eggs played a great part in the Easter celebrations. Forbidden during Lent as part of the fast, they were symbolic of feasting and joy on Easter Sunday. They were coloured by boiling with gorse or beetroot and sometimes were wrapped in fern frond during boiling to give a mottled effect on the shell. Later, these gaily coloured eggs were blessed in Church and distributed to the congregation for eating; or for Easter games.

These games included such pastimes as eggrolling, when the people, with their clergy, went to a local hillside where they tried to roll the eggs unbroken through rickets at the foot of the slope.

In Lancashire, at the present day, groups of boys called pace (or pasch) tour certain districts begging for eggs before performing an Easter play. They recite a rhyme which promises the ungenerous that "your hens shall all lay addled eggs and your cocks shall lay a stone"

It is interesting to find in an old copy of the Amersham Parish Magazine that some fifty years ago, the children of All Saints Sunday School collected eggs at Easter and sent 480 to an Aylesbury hospital.

COLESHILL SCHOLARS TO VISIT R.O.S.P.A. HOUSE

M.W.

The children of classes 1 and 2 will visit the headquarters of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents on Wednesday, May 29th and afterwards go to the Victoria and Albert Museum where they will have a conducted tour of the costume court section.

THE CHURCH REGISTER

Mary Morris of Winchmore Hill, who lived for many years in Coleshill, died on January 14th. The service was held at St. Mary's.
R.I.P.

SERVICES

ALL SAINTS, COLESHILL

Every Sunday:
 9.00a.m. Parish Communion
 10.00a.m. Sunday School

2nd & 4th Sundays:
 6.00p.m. Evensong

Good Friday:
 11.00a.m. Ante-Communion, Litany
 and prayers

Easter Day
 9.00a.m. Parish Communion
 10.00a.m. Sunday School
 6.00p.m. Evensong

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. MARY,
AMERSHAM

Every Sunday:
 8.00a.m. Holy Communion
 10.00a.m. Children's Service
 6.00p.m. Evensong

1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays:

11.00a.m. Sung Eucharist
2nd & 4th Sundays

11.00a.m. Mattins

Good Friday

10.00a.m. Ante-Communion
 2.00 - 3.00p.m. Service of Devotion
 8.00p.m. Recital of Music

Easter Day

8.00a.m. Holy Communion
 10.00a.m. Children's Church
 11.00a.m. Holy Communion
 6.00p.m. Evensong

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Mon. Mch 25 Mothers Union Lady Day Service, St. George's 3p.m.

Thurs 28 Mobile Library Van, Coleshill
 Committee - Church Pete

Sun 31 Confirmation Service, St. Mary's 6p.n.

Tue Apr 2 Sisterhood, Mrs. Spooner

Thurs 11 Mobile Library Van, Coleshill
 W.I. Mrs. Price Hill, "Three Queens"

Good Friday: Recital by Harewood Singers, St. Mary's 7.30p.m. Bach, Brahms
 etc.

Sun Apr 14 EASTER DAY

Tue 16 Sisterhood, Open Meeting arranged by Mrs. Chambers

Wed 17 Annual General Meeting, Village Hall

Thurs 18 Mothers Union, Coleshill. Mrs. Harvey

Fri 19 Bridge Drive

Thurs 25 Mobile Library Van, Coleshill

Tues 30 Sisterhood, Talk and film. Mrs. Newberry Fox

SAT MARCH 30 Amersham & Chesham Bois Choral Society Concert, Dr. Chal-
 loner's Grammar School Hall, 7.30p.n. "Carmina Burana" - Orff

Thurs May 2 Vellore Concert, Royal Albert Hall - Details in Church Porch

Wed 8 Mothers Union, Overseas meeting, Aylesbury.

Sat June 8 CHURCH FETE

RECTOR: The Revd. Allan Campbell, M.A. Beaumont, Hervines Rd, Amersham 1135

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