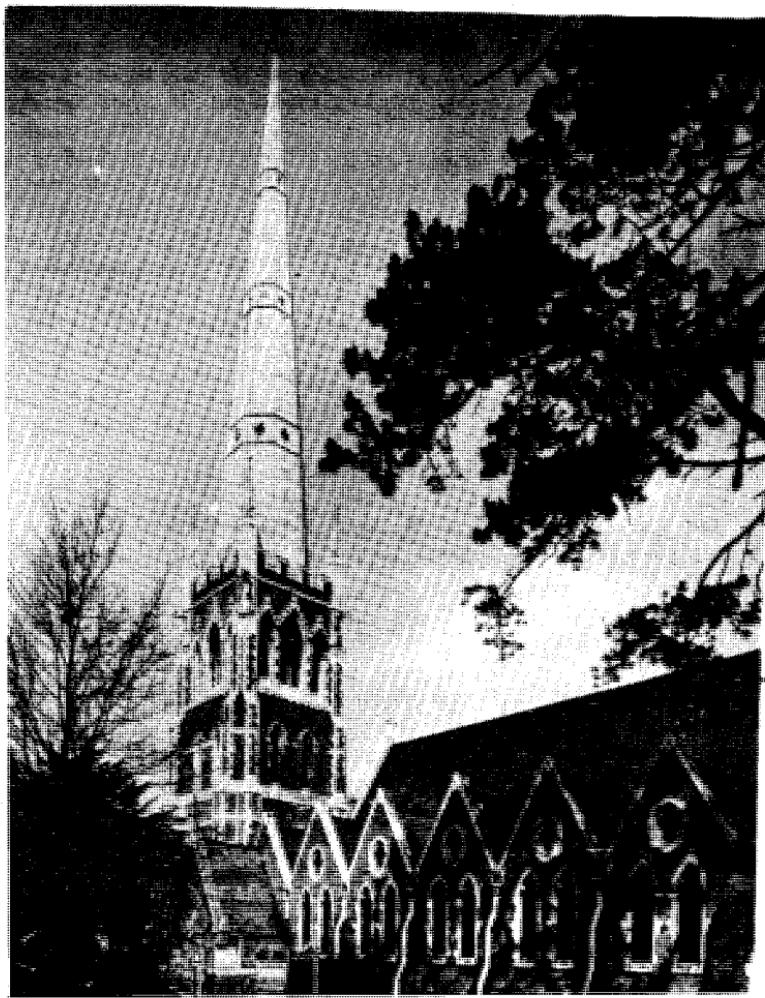


THE SPIRE



JAN. 1978

THE MAGAZINE OF ST. JAMES'S CHURCH
HAMPTON HILL, MIDDLESEX

CHURCH OFFICERS

VICAR

The Rev. R.H. Brunt, B.A., A.K.C., The Vicarage, 46 St. James's Road. 979 2069

ASSISTANT CURATE

The Rev. S.D. Harris, M.P.S. Dip.R.S., 69 St. James's Avenue. 979 3163

READERS

Mr. D.A.F. Rawlins, 75 Burton's Road. 979 3720

Miss H.M. Stanton, M.A. 63 Park Road. 979 5821

Mr. A.R. Taylor, Dip.R.S., 68 Park Road. 979 7042

CHURCHWARDENS

Mr. G.I. Toninson, O.B.E., 36 St. James's Road. 979 2426

Mr. L. Rockliffe, 40 Gloucester Road, Teddington. 977 4909

ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER

Mr. R.J.C. Dafforne, 7 Blandford Road, Teddington. 977 3439

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Secretary: Mr. T.R.M. Baldwin, 72 Wordsworth Road

Treasurer: Mr. G.I. Robinson, O.B.E., 36 St. James's Road. 979 2426

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP RECORDER

Mr. L. Rockliffe, 40 Gloucester Road, Teddington. 977 4909

SOCIAL COMMITTEE INFORMATION OFFICER

Mr. R.E. Bridges, 19 St. James's Road. 979 6865

OFFICER FOR BOOKINGS OF PARISH HALL

Mrs. E.V. Severn, 4 Ormond Drive, Hampton. 979 1954

SUPERVISOR AND OFFICER FOR BOOKINGS OF WAYSIDE

Mrs. R.A. Bridges, 19 St. James's Road. 979 6865

THE MAGAZINE

Chairman of the Editorial Board: The Vicar

Treasurer: Mr. H.E. Severn, 4 Ormond Drive, Hampton. 979 1954

ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER

Mrs. M.M. Lawrence, 41 Wellington Road. 977 5775

ORGANISER FOR CHURCH FLOWERS

Mrs. R.A. Bridges, 19 St. James's Road. 979 6865

BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE RECORDER

Mrs. D. Childs, 2B Seymour Road. 979 9054

SUNDAY SERVICES AND MEETINGS

Holy Communion Every Sunday 8.00 a.m.

Holy Communion First Sunday in month and Festivals 12.10 p.m.

PARISH COMMUNION Every Sunday 9.30 a.m.

On most Fourth Sundays also Family and Parade Service 9.30 a.m.

Parish Breakfast Every Sunday in Wayside of Church 10.40 a.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS (except in holiday periods):

 Infants' Every Sunday except Fourth in Wayside 11.20 a.m.

 Junior Every Sunday except Fourth in Wayside 9.20 a.m.

Infant Baptism After due notice, at Parish Communion 9.30 a.m.

or on Fourth Sundays 4.00 p.m.

WELCOME SERVICE Every Second Sunday 4.30 p.m.

EVENSONG Every Sunday except Second Sunday 6.30 p.m.

Young People's Fellowship Every Sunday in Wayside 8.00 p.m.

WEEKDAY SERVICES AND MEETINGS

As announced: See under 'Dates to Note'

A COMMON LANGUAGE

We can all imagine how much the world might be helped and united in understanding if its peoples could express themselves in a common language.

I read a book the other day in which the Church was described as "a community which speaks the language of God", and this sparked off a train of thought. There are so many different kinds of language. Consider the baby - from the moment of its birth it has to start learning the language of breathing-in the breath of life, the language of touch, taste, smell, hearing, sight and speech and, above all, the language of experience, for experience speaks its own most important language.

The language of words which allows the growing child to communicate ever more readily with family, friends and the outside world opens the door to fresh fields, sometimes to understanding and sometimes, unhappily, to misunderstanding.

Science, medicine, the Arts, all have their special languages which have to be learned by great application, and their use opens new doors of discovery and understanding to those who practise them, and through them, to benefit the world at large. Without "the language" those doors would remain closed. Science is the obvious example; the ever growing and enriched language has opened up vistas of achievement, knowledge and vision undreamed of even 100 years ago. It has led Man also to the threshold of annihilation, to the ultimate choice between survival or eradication.

So, the language of Men can unite and it can dis-unite. A Frenchman is united to other Frenchman and to France by speaking French but is not thus united with his neighbour German; a trade unionist speaks his language but this does not automatically lead to understanding and brotherly love and consideration of his neighbour in another union or to the man in the street who does not happen to speak that language.

But consider the language of God. What if the whole World learned to speak His language as their common tongue? Even those who have not studied it know some of the words, "Love thy neighbour as (in the same measure as) you love yourself", with as much care and concern as you show to your self. What a wonderful prospect for Mankind there would be if indeed God's language, **correctly used and interpreted**, were to become the world's common language.

I'm interested in languages. I always have been in a non-dedicated sort of way. A little bit of French "shows willing" when in France; a little bit of Spanish brings broad smiles and offers of hospitality in Spain; a little bit of German shows a willingness to communicate with our erstwhile enemies. But alas, I've never studied enough, never **really** applied myself to acquire facility. After all, the opportunity of using these languages does not present itself in my life very often.

But, to learn the language of God! Here surely is something worth doing; but to do it takes firstly the wish to learn and then the effort to support the wish; to go where the language is used and experienced in worship and prayer; to be faithful in doing one's homework in reading the Bible and in prayer and meditation - for in all these one is in communion with one's Teacher. Then to experience the living language in company with one's fellow-students and to know the joy of a method of communication which enriches the whole of everyday life by the reality of its message - man to fellow-man.

Margery Orton.

ROUND AUSTRALIA BY BUS

I wrote out to my friends and asked: "Is there anything like the USA Greyhound bus service in Australia?" "Yes", the answer came back, "the Ansett Pioneer Express Bus Service". Mrs Champion investigated for me, found that it was well worthwhile if I wanted to travel extensively in Australia, and got me a 2 months' Aussie bus-pass on which I could have travelled to practically every town of any size in Australia three times over and more if I had wanted to! There is also a one month's Aussie bus-pass, at a very advantageous rate, and this had attracted plenty of young people from New Zealand and Canada as well as young Australians.

Having recklessly embarked on this, I said to my friends in Darwin, my first port of call, that I was going to Brisbane by bus. "Are you really?" they asked, a bit dazed. Somewhat shaken by their incredulity I looked more closely at the map and realised that Brisbane was really a little further away than I had thought; in fact 2500 miles, further than from London to Moscow. However, I was being met in Brisbane by an old friend from Uganda days, on a given date and time, so I waved goodbye to my assembled friends in Darwin, ex-German, ex-American, ex-Vietnamese, all now Australian, and hoped that the apprehension on their faces would soon wear off. I had the most fascinating time; tiring? yes, I suppose it was tiring, because we spent nights on the buses, but I got very good at cat-napping, and there were frequent stops for coffee and meals. There was a toilet on the bus, and fresh drinking water, though this ran out and the air conditioning went wrong on the run up to Alice Springs from Adelaide. The drivers were an admirable set: they acted as couriers throughout and gave us running commentaries on the country and places we went through, not omitting at times their views on the Australian economy. In general we were in the charge of one driver, who passed the bus over to another every 400-500 miles; on the Adelaide - Alice run there were two drivers, necessitated by a long and trying journey over "dirt", un-made-up, roads. One driver let us be aware of how apprehensive he was of the storm-clouds gathering over the Queensland bush and dirt roads, and said he hoped we felt that we could push if necessary.

The other passengers were very interesting: older housewives who had come out as pioneers, and could tell me of the hardships in earlier days; farmers talking about their difficulties, the excessive droughts of recent years, the visissitudes of the cattle-ranches; youngsters from New Zealand and from Britain having a look at Australia and seeing if there were any jobs available. I met an outstanding English girl-student, who I am quite sure will be one of the first candidates for the Women's Ministry in the church, at £1.45 p.m. at a remote junction in the Northern Territory and then only for 10 minutes.

Throughout the journeys there were of course vast distances of bush; areas with gum trees, some tall, some stunted, then low-lying thorn, then dry spinifex grass. The emptiness was rather un-nerving, mile upon mile and not a soul, not another vehicle, at times a few cattle or some kangaroos; this was very different from the populated African landscapes I have been used to.

I met friends familiar to Hampton Hill and St. James's: Ellen Seidenkranz who trained as a nurse at the West Middlesex Hospital and worked in Teddington in the early 1950s; in Sydney were Dorothy and Laurie Brown; Laurie is now Professor of Psychology at the University of New South Wales and Dorothy is specialising in the teaching English as a second language; Roger

and Rachel, who were born in Hampton Hill, are in New Zealand, but Martin and Pascal, who have both visited Hampton Hill, were there. I stayed with Mrs. Morgan, a friend of the Rockliffes, who has recently attended St. James's. I had a good day with Mary Sayce, now Mrs Mary Johnson, in Petrie near Brisbane; she has a husband Harry and an enchanting baby-boy Michael. I visited the Rev. Jim Cranswick and his wife Ursula, in Melbourne; Jim is coping with a densely-populated urban parish with a third of the inhabitants Greek. My last visit was to Geraldton, north of Perth, where the Bishop of the North West, the Rt. Rev. Howell Witt, administers a diocese as big as Europe, leaving out Spain and southern Italy, and which stretches from Geraldton to Darwin.

I met people of great courage and with high ideals in Australia; I attended and saw a wide variety of churches. I like to think back on an illuminated cross which shone out in the middle of the opal-mining town of Coober Pedy on the Alice run; we always passed through and stopped for a coffee-break at midnight, and there across the wide deserted street was this bright cross, illuminated by a panel in the door of a tiny Roman Catholic chapel. The chapel had been hewn out of the rock by Italian miners; very small, very bright in the gold and yellow quartz of the naked rock; and it was prayed in, we could feel that, and we added our prayers. I'm glad that little cross shines out every night there in the middle of Australia.

Hannah Stanton.

THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

There's no doubt about it - you have to go a long way to beat the festive atmosphere that emanates from Hampton Hill High Street at this time of the year. The big switch on came on Monday December 5 at 7.30 p.m. It was a fine dry night and the procession was led by the Twickenham Sea Cadet Corps Band and several hundred people fell in behind them and walked the length of the High Street and back admiring the decorations and generally enjoying themselves. Father Christmas in his sleigh was also present and some money was collected by his helpers for the Teddington Rotary Club.

We have since been up to town to see the "lights" and the decorations but they have lost their former glory and even the Christmas Tree in Trafalgar Square with only its plain white lights is rather unimpressive and not nearly so welcoming as our own "illuminations" in Hampton Hill. A pity though that the Park Road end of the High Street don't seem to have quite the same enthusiasm as further down the road, perhaps next year? Meanwhile, a big thank you to all the shops who have made an effort to look festive and to all those who organised this happy event. And last of all from all the children who received free balloons - thank you to the Hampton Hill Association for this unexpected bonus.

H.T.

THE HIDING PLACE

A few months ago I asked readers to let me know if they saw notices about the showing of this film. Almost at once we received an invitation from the distributors-GTO Films-to a preview for its London debut and to attend a lunch and conference about it.

There can be no doubt that the film we saw was excellent in every way. It is always tempting to say "it's not as good as the book" of any transition but I suppose this is an obvious concomitant when the book comes first and the film afterwards. The film makers had taken great pains to give an accurate picture. The actual house and street in Haarlem where the ten Booms lived was used and Corrie ten Boom herself, and others of the original participants were there to advise. The public version of the film is two and a half hours long and has been taken from the original which was five hours long and some of the unused bits of this we saw during the conference. About half the film is now of the Ravensbruck scenes and although these are done very well indeed-granted that living actresses cannot be expected actually to become emaciated to death and louse ridden - and the worst horrors were suggested rather than shockingly exposed to us.

Rupert and I both felt that we would have preferred a greater proportion of the Dutch part of the story on the grounds that everyone knows what went on at Ravensbruck but the episodes of the resistance in Haarlem and the character and humour of the ten Boom family are new and unique. However we are probably wrong about this. Since we have been talking about the film we have discovered that most of the post-war generation have never heard of Ravensbruck. Had they seen this film they would have no idea of the significance of its tall chimneys belching out stinking smoke, nor of the young Nazi officer's reference to Corrie, wasting her time looking after a handful of mentally handicapped children, showering them with love and affection and receiving so much in return. Perhaps this film could do more to discredit the National Front's inspiration than any amount of political argument.

From the conference we were interested to discover that the new Classic 3 cinema being built on the site of the old Lyon's Corner House in Oxford Street will be opening on December 22 with "The Hiding Place" and intends to continue with a policy of showing "family films". We were told that the Classic chain throughout the country had a reputation for showing the Xiest and most 'advanced' films, so this may be a straw in the wind about the way public opinion is going. The first showing of the film will be a charity performance for the "Tear Fund". The better the following showings are supported the longer it will stay, so if you want to encourage it, go and see it as soon as possible! When I discovered that London Cinema seats cost £2 each I jettisoned my original idea of having a parish party, though some Churches have already booked the whole cinema (about 210 seats) for some performances. If the film is the success in London that it has been in other parts of the country it may well be into 1979 before we get it locally.

C.H.B.

T.V. AND THE FAMILY

When Mrs Brooke came to talk to the M.U. in December she described how she and members in North London, and groups in other centres of the country, had set about studying the amount and kind of T.V. viewing done by school-children. The pattern of results she described was not surprising, but the actual quantity of viewing probably did amaze those of us in Hampton Hill who have recently begun to think that the spell of T.V. for children was beginning to wear thin. It seems that the people who were really amazed and also somewhat upset about the results were the staff in some of the schools where the surveys were made. Many said that they were 'apalled' by the long hours their pupils spent in front of the box.

Nine p.m. is supposed to be the time after which the broadcasting authorities can assume that children are not in their audience. But it appears that a substantial number of children watch continuously from the time they arrive home from school until ten or eleven at night and even do their homework with T.V. as a background which they continue to watch. In many instances the M.U. team were invited to join in discussion with Parent-Teacher Associations. Their general recommendation is that children under ten should not watch alone or indiscriminately and should not have control of the knob! (This does, of course, assume that their parents or those in control are discriminating viewers.)

The material collected from the school surveys was systematised and became part of the M.U. report to the Annan Commission. The rest of the report came from material submitted by the groups who comment regularly on programmes they see; both those they are in favour of and those of which they disapprove. One could well say that disapproval is irrelevant, since no-one needs to look at anything they don't like but that they should allow it to others who do like, but there are some valid complaints. For instance many groups have noted the amount of violence shown in early editions of news programmes and that in this respect I.B.A. are more careful than B.B.C. and at the November conference, when B.B.C.'s Adviser to the Director-General and I.B.A.'s Head of Advertising Control spoke to members of the Social Problems Department, it became clear that both had children in mind when planning early entertainment programmes and that a great deal of care was given to the content of advertisements because these were watched irrespective of programme choice. Some of us, however, felt that the whole social ambience was undesirable. But it is only fair to recognise that this applies to nearly all mass advertising; wherever it is, it is mainly designed to create dissatisfaction and stress, which are supposed to be relieved by purchasing the advertised goods or service.

In discussion after the meeting those who had grown up before the advent of T.V. found it difficult to believe that anyone could be adversely affected because of what they chose to see, but recognised that it might be different for those whose lives were subjected to standards of the media from birth. We used to assume that violence in "make-believe" was harmless or even a useful outlet for the feelings of violence that we all have, and that violence in Westerns and Disney's would always be recognised as 'fiction'. But how about all the violence now presented as 'real'? On the radio recently one of the designers of our entertainment said that we had nothing to worry about because the aim was to present the degree of shock that the public were able to take at the time, and when they had got used to that, the next degree of shock would be presented. It therefore looks as if the time must come when no horror will be great enough to shock our senses at all.

Y.P.F. ANNUAL REPORT

This year started on a sad note with the prospect of losing our leader, Martin, to whom we are all very grateful for his many years' service, had to resign owing to outside pressures, and unfortunately we have been unable as yet to replace him.

Consequently, most events were received with little enthusiasm which was made worse by the cancellation of the annual holiday. To say the least, the year seemed to be full of gloom. However, thanks to the efforts of Ian Fisher and the build up of the Silver Jubilee celebrations, Y.P.F.'s spirit's seemed revitalised to a certain extent.

With a little help from our friends we enjoyed great success in the Parish Concert and the June celebrations, winning first prize in the float competition. In fact, once we were under the organisation of Stage Manager Tony Lawrence, assisted by Eila Severn and Margaret Lawrence, there seemed no end to our talents even to the extent of presenting a slightly belated encore of our repertoire at Laurel Dene for the old people.

From there on in we enjoyed numerous events. Our Retreat in the summer was a great success and at subsequent meetings there was an aura of fellowship once again. The Welcome Service did a great deal for us as a fellowship as well and seemed to indicate our ability to do things if we set our minds to them.

After the summer break we decided to close Y.P.F. until a leader was found but we still meet socially as a group and very much enjoyed the Harvest Supper and the Parish Dance. Five of our members were confirmed this year at St. James's; Keith, Lucy and Sarah, Ann and Johanna. The Confirmation seems to have encouraged a more regular church attendance by Y.P.F. members. We usually try to attend Midnight Service on Christmas Eve and this year we will be joining the parish for the Carol Singing.

We are still holding our "Very Formal Annual Christmas Dinner" in mid-December, continuing the tradition which has proved such a popular and enjoyable event in the past - without which Y.P.F.'s Christmas celebrations would not be quite complete.

After all the festivities Y.P.F. will be meeting in 1978 at the Parish New Year Party in which some of the members are taking active roles as hostesses and assistants to the M.C. Hopefully, 1978 will also see the resumption of our meetings under the auspices of a new leader.

K.L. & H.L.

(The Church Council has decided that, instead of having long written reports from every church organisation presented at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, these should be spaced out over the year and appear in the pages of The Spire. We are grateful to Keith Lambert and Helen Lawrance for starting us off with this report on the ups and downs of our Young People's Fellowship. - Ed.)

TUESDAY CLUB

On Tuesday, November 29, we four very nervous Tuesday Club ladies climbed on to the stage of All Saints' Church Hall, Hampton, to do battle against four of their Wives' Club members in a general knowledge quiz. Anyone of us would willingly have changed places with our colleagues in the audience who came along to support us.

Help, I thought, my mind's a blank: suppose I don't know any of the answers? However, though nerves didn't quite disappear until the last question was over, we competitors found we were thoroughly enjoying it. We found we even knew some of the right answers. Though we didn't do well on the musical and sounds questions, I'm sure our audience enjoyed watching us squirm.

And so on behalf of all Tuesday Club members who attended, I would like to extend thanks to All Saints' for their hospitality, and to their "quiz-mistress" for a very noble effort in preparing such an entertaining range of questions.

N.M.

P.S. We won by 3 points.

AROUND THE SPIRE

The start of 1978 brings the need of some repair work. The billiards-table and table-tennis table in Wayside both need attention - if you can offer help please contact Alan Taylor (979 7042), who will tell you exactly what is needed.

Our young mums with their babies and toddlers have been enjoying "Keep Fit" on alternate Fridays. This has proved very popular, so starting on Friday January 13 at the new time of 2.15 p.m. they will be meeting every week in the Parish Hall for just one hour. Just turn up with your babies if you are interested.

We were glad to see David Pailthorpe back after such a short absence caused by an operation and hope he will soon fully recover his strength.

Bessie Smith has also had an operation after a long and tedious wait. We are pleased to say she has made good progress and hopes, as we all do, that she will very soon be her old self again. The return of her daughter and family from Australia will surely hasten her recovery.

Our Ladies' Choir has been very busy since October meeting nearly every week in preparation to entertain at Laurel Dene in November, sing on Remembrance Day in church and entertain at the O.P.W. Annual Christmas Party. All seemed well appreciated. We are now back to alternate Mondays for our practice, and of course all are welcome.

Has anyone a John Bull printing-stamp they could loan the editorial board for a few days - or perhaps weeks?

There has been much coming and going in our parish in December. Janet and Brian Jeffries and their children have moved into Ormond Crescent; Janet and Mark Robinson to Ormond Avenue, Coryn and Ian Robinson to Courtlands Avenue. Although these are all moves out of the parish we understand they all hope to keep their ties to St. James's. We are pleased to see Gillian Gostling has moved into Buckingham Road - nearer than she has been for some months now. We wish them all well in their new homes.

Our warmest congratulations go to Caroline (Nee Bolt) and Robert Braine who were married in Hull (where both are students) in December.

A LETTER FROM ROME

16.12.77

Dear Friends at St. James's,

More than half of our lovely stay in Rome has unfortunately passed by now. In fact, by the time you read this letter we might already be returning to Hampton Hill. We are looking forward very much indeed to seeing you all again. Although we have met many nice and interesting people it has felt a little bit like being suspended in a void; these months away from home have helped us to appreciate how valuable it is to live within a real community of friends.

Of course we have loved every moment of our stay. We don't have to tell you that Rome is a fascinating place. "Rome of the Cesars" and "Rome of the Popes" the guide-books call it. "Both" Romes have so many attractions they can keep a sightseer busy for well over six months. One day one may stroll across the very same large, smooth, black, five-cornered paving stones in the Via Sacra in the Roman Forum that Caesar or Augustus walked across. And another day one marvels at the incomparable figures on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel which Michelangelo painted for a Pope. He lay on his back day in day out for several years while he completed the immense task.

Another facet of this unique jewel of a town is the Rome of the very early Church. San Clemente is a small church near the Colosseum where one can climb down some very narrow flights of stairs into excavations below the ground-level. On the lowest floor one sees the original walls of a Roman tenement block which was burnt down in Nero's fire. This building used to contain a room for Christian worship - the earliest kind of meeting place within a private house before they had any church buildings side by side with a Mithraic temple (the altar of the Mithras cult is still there). In an adjoining room they have cut a hole into the brickwork so that one can see into the rushing waters of the Cloaca Maxima - the original Roman sewer. A few feet above is the floor of a sixth century Christian basilica which used the walls of a subsequent Roman house, and back on the ground-floor a church was built in the 10th century which is still in use now. It has a most beautiful simple atrium - an open courtyard at the entrance end which used to accommodate the Catechumens, the newly converted Christians who were not admitted into the church proper.

The catacombs are those subterranean cemeteries which not only Christians used to bury their dead. Always situated outside the city boundary they contained miles and miles of narrow passages, sometimes several storeys deep. In times of persecution the Christians hid here for their worship. The dead were laid out in neat rectangular cavities on either side of the passages. The available space was utilised to the fullest extent by hollowing out three of these cavities above each other. On our visit the guide took us into a small side passage where they had removed the marble or terracotta slabs that had closed off the graves, and we held a lighted candle through a modern metal grill to look at the remains of a skeleton. A person in the fourth century - now little piles of dust and a few bones still intact. Marble tablets let into the earth walls of the passages glistened with condensation. They showed simple Christian symbols like the anchor for salvation, a bird for the soul, or the fish. All the other more precious mementos of the earlier times have been transferred into museums now. Our particular catacomb also contained the silver coffin of the child saint St. Agnes after whom it was named.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

January

- 10 20.00 Liturgical Committee (63 Park Road)
- 11 M.U. Wave of Prayer
- 12 20.00 Stewardship Committee (106, Park Road)
- 14 19.45 Parish Christmas Party (Hall)
- 15 Sunday services as usual. After Evensong, at 17.35, Father Tom Stanton will speak about life and work in a school in Rhodesia, and light refreshments will be served.
- 16 14.30 Editorial Board (21, St. James's Road)
- 17 20.00 Prayer Meeting (75, Burton's Road)
- 18-25: WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY
- 18 07.30 Holy Communion
- 19 20.00 Parochial Church Council (W)
- 22 Morning services and Infant Baptism as usual, but no Evensong here : instead we will take part in the UNITED SERVICE at 18.45 at St. Mary's, Hampton. Cars outside this church to offer lifts at 18.20
- 24 20.00 Quarterly meeting of the Committee of the Hampton Council of Churches (Hampton Methodist Church)
- 25 THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL : 19.15 Holy Communion
- 26 20.00 Prayer Meeting (69, St. James's Avenue)
- 31 20.00 Prayer Meeting (75, Burton's Road)

February

- 1 14.30 Mothers' Union Open Meeting : 'Meditation' (W)
- 2 CANDLEMAS : 19.15 Holy Communion
- 7 20.00 Properties' Committee (81, Park Road)
- 8 ASH WEDNESDAY : 19.15 Holy Communion
- 9 20.00 Prayer Meeting (69, St. James's Avenue).

April

- 19 Annual Parochial Church Meeting (Hall)

BAPTISMS

November

- 27 Spencer Edward Julian, 52, Wordsworth Road
- David Christopher Kirk, 28, Wolsey Road
- Victoria Williams, 3, Lime Tree Court, Burton's Road

December

- 26 Stephen John Kibble, 10, Warwick Close.
- Joanne Deborah Pearce, 105, Burton's Road

MARRIAGE

December

- 17 Richard William Britton to Jane Bradley

CREMATION

December

- 1 William Victor Charles Howard, 3, Burton's Road, aged 65 years (at South-West Middlesex Crematorium)

Next to the little old basilica of St. Agnes through which one enters the catacomb is the mausoleum of St. Constantia, the daughter of the first Christian emperor Constantine. The lofty round brick building with the most beautiful vaulted mosaic ceilings, contains a replica of her dark red porphyry sarcophagus, the original of which also stands in the Vatican museums.

In another part of that remarkable treasure house of art we found a small marble copy of the statue of the Great Diana of Ephesus which is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles.

St. Paul himself is commemorated in a monastery just five minutes from where we live. It is still run now by Trappist monks, who farm a little area within the growing sea of modern suburbia that engulfs this oasis of peace more and more closely. They maintain the gardens and buildings beautifully. In a large but very simple church of pale brickwork Mass is continually being said day and night by a rota of monks who see it as one of their duties to intercede for mankind. Another church is built on the spot where St. Paul was beheaded. According to tradition three fountains sprang up where his head hit the earth: one can still see the fountains, and the whole area is called Tre Fontane.

Another little sanctuary across the road from there is about 1900 years younger. In 1947 some children had a vision of the Virgin there, and gradually the place became a shrine where countless marble plaques witness to healings prayed for at this very young holy place.

In one of the five great basilicas of Rome I saw a beautiful way of witnessing to a living faith. These places are so easily treated as touring attractions. Here was a group of German women tourists who, on entering the basilica, began to sing a hymn. The simple melody echoed most beautifully around the ornate marble floors and columns as they slowly advanced. They stopped round the curved altar rail, spoke the Lord's Prayer and a few other prayers loudly and clearly, ended with another hymn, and then proceeded to view details of the building. They had first honoured God by using the building for its proper function - worship.

Not even six months are enough to see everything that Rome has to offer. We are happy to have another few weeks to explore it and that we were so much more fortunate than the average tourist.

Until we see you again, all the best and kind regards to St. James's in Hampton Hill from the Bucknells in Rome.