

May has witnessed two massive explosions of quite different character. Each has affected a large number of people unexpectedly. The first is the Chernobyl Nuclear Reactor in Russia, the second the local elections. The explosion at Chernobyl has demonstrated what effect radioactivity can have on populations hundreds of miles away from the centre of activity; the second has given a great shake up to our political life. I wonder, if the coming of the Holy Spirit were to be described today, might not one of these two pictures be used to make the point? Just how much effect did the Spirit have on the early Christians? Wasn't it as if the whole people were affected far and wide? Wasn't it as if the disciples had no defences against the power of the Spirit? Wasn't it as if the status quo was turned upside down? Wasn't it as if nothing would ever be quite the same again?

Would we want it so? Probably not. For these things expose us to the unknown and affect our lives in an unsettling way. It is much more comfortable to know what God wants us to do and to feel safe in our behaviour and practices. In June the Church remembers one of the greatest prophets of the bible, John the Baptist. He challenged the people of his time, both in Church and State. He likened the leaders of the Church to a "brood of vipers" and he challenged the private life of the King. Not a very wise thing to do! Some of our greatest reformers, such as William Wilberforce who led a life-long campaign against slavery, and Elizabeth Fry who did so much to improve conditions in our prisons, had to fight against the spiritual and political leaders of their day to achieve what we now consider "normal" situations.

From time to time comments in The Spire have received adverse criticism when points of view have been expressed which were plainly uncomfortable for some. This is not to say that these points of view are necessarily beyond criticism - but to say that a faith which is comfortable is not always right. I finish with a quotation from the book which is reviewed elsewhere in this magazine: "God is in all things, so that there is no particle in creation and no experience of yours in which he is not with you. That is why a spirituality which cocoons us from the pain of this world, or which declares that the Church should keep out of political and social justice questions, is a false spirituality and an idolatry. Certainly, the Church must never identify itself with any particular political party, but to say that the Church must keep out of politics is to assent that the ways in which we relate as human beings is outside the scope of religion".

Nicholas Chubb

* * * * *

A SLIGHTLY CYNICAL MINISTER on his first flight in a Jumbo Jet said that it reminded him of his church; several hundred people sitting back looking bored and a few stewards and crew members rushed off their feet!

UNITED SERVICE FOR CHRISTIAN AID WEEK - 11.5.86

I am sure that every Christian Aid volunteer will at some time wonder just how worthwhile his or her efforts are. As individuals there seems to be so little we can do to challenge the great injustices in the world. The joyful service of praise and prayer that was held at All Saints, Hampton on Sunday 11th May was a very encouraging experience that greatly helped to counteract any such feelings.

The guest preacher was Rev. Kenneth Forrest, Head of Area Staff at the Christian Aid headquarters in London. He gave just two examples of CA assistance in the world today. The first was to an individual tenant farmer in India who was being unfairly treated by his landowner. The second was to an entire village in Indonesia that had been given about a dozen oxen to work the land and Rev. Forrest was himself present to witness the excitement as the ploughs were pulled by beast for the first time. Deep down we all know that it is better to do something than nothing at all, but it was very reassuring to hear Rev. Forrest state that simple fact and especially while in Christian fellowship together.

The prayers were very well composed and there is one line that I should especially like to share with you. "Lord, help us to move the mountains; and if, for now, they won't be moved, help us to soar over them". The hymns included such favourites as Tell Out My Soul and When I Needed a Neighbour.

At the end of the service I believe that all present felt uplifted and encouraged to face the activities of Christian Aid week more positively.

Ann Davis

ASCENSION DAY - 8th MAY, 1986

On Ascension Day, 8th May, I attended the Parish Communion. The service stressed that the "Good News" was that although Jesus had left this earth, He was still with us in Spirit, and as we travelled through life, as pilgrims with a message and a goal, we too, could be enriched and fulfilled by His Spirit and pass this on to others we met on our way.

The Liturgical Dancers expressed this theme most movingly in their presentation depicting their sorrow when Jesus ascended, and their joy when they quickly realised that His Spirit still remained with them in this world. They became filled with happiness and joyfully passed the words of Christ from one to another and so made new disciples spreading His teachings throughout the world.

The service was also a culmination of the Lent Course the theme of which had been "What on Earth is the Church for";* many of the congregation were members of these groups, so during coffee and the general get-together after the service Alan Taylor took the opportunity to thank all who had taken part in these discussions and trusted they would continue into the future. (*see next page)

Dorothy Weston

WHAT ON EARTH IS THE CHURCH FOR?

The organisers of the last nationwide Lent Course have produced further study material for any groups who would wish to continue. These papers are available from the Vicar, for any existing groups who would like to continue this study. There is also a list at the back of the church for any interested people who would like to form a new group specifically for this purpose. By the time this magazine is published, the group might have started meeting, but it goes without saying that additional members are welcome at any time.

MAY DAY HOLIDAY RAMBLE - 5.5.86

"Good morning London its 7.00am. LBC weather forecast; light showers turning to brighter periods and some sunshine later in the day".

Suitably dressed for walking and prepared for any eventuality with the weather we packed our picnic lunches and joined about 20 or so other stalwart walkers outside the church at 11.00am. David Taylor provided copies of the route - a 4.5 mile "stroll" over Ranmore Common, just outside Dorking.

All safely arrived at the starting point, even if Roger and Hilde were unsure if their car would make it; and after a search for lost car keys which turned out to be in the owners pocket the all time! we set forth.

True to the forecast it started to rain lightly, but soon stopped. The ground was a little muddy but did not spoil our enthusiasm for nature. We steadily plodded on keeping a watch for any wild animals and flowers. The only animals we saw were farm ones, horses, cows and sheep and a beautiful white peacock strutting around someone's garden, together with a notice saying "Beware of the Bull".

No sign of the bull was seen and about one and half hours later we stopped to eat lunch sitting on a convenient tree trunk. It was here that a chorus of Happy Birthday was sung, with gusto, to celebrate Alan Taylor's birthday.

Suitably refreshed we continued our walk at a steady pace admiring the clumps of cowslips seen growing in the wild.

We skirted a beautiful golf course and with views of the downs in all-directions we slowly completed a wide circle to return to our starting point about 4.00pm.

Everyone, young and old thoroughly enjoyed their day with nature and we would recommend as many as possible should try and join us for the next parish ramble.

The Lloyd family

LOST AND FOUND

*I sought my soul but my soul I could not see.
I sought my God but my God eluded me.
I sought my brother - and I found all three.*

TEDDINGTON CHORAL SOCIETY

On Sunday 27th April, in place of the normal Evensong there was a performance by the Teddington Choral Society under their Musical Director, Mr. Geoffrey Bowyer. They sang the first chorus from Rossini's Stabat Mater and then Mendelssohn's Hymn of Praise.

The Hymn of Praise in particular was a delight, with the usual symphonic introduction to the main choral section being played on the organ by Mr. Bowyer. The work includes a number of beautiful solo passages for Soprano and Tenor. They are, however, demanding because of their wide vocal range, but were sung most effectively by particular members of the chorus. A special mention should be made of the soprano soloist who sang "Praise thou the Lord".

At various points during the performance, Mr. Bowyer gave us some of the background to the work, which was much appreciated. He mentioned that at the first performance before the Duke of Saxony in 1840, the entire audience had stood for "Let all men praise the Lord". This is a passage sung by the chorus, largely unaccompanied, and having heard it, one can readily appreciate why - it is truly a Hymn of Praise. The work concludes with a chorus containing the only solo for Bass Trombone in the musical repertoire! This was clearly heard in the organ accompaniment.

It was a real pleasure to have been able to listen to this uplifting music in such a fine setting as St. James's. We thank the Teddington Choral Society, and look forward to welcoming them again in the future.

Peter Roberts



"For that matter, I haven't seen you down at the car showroom lately."

APCM - 17.4.86

Most of the reports to the meeting were submitted in writing. Apart from a review of these, the main discussion of the evening centred around a motion which it was hoped would ensure a regular turnover of PCC membership. The meeting adopted the following motion, which will take effect from the next APCM:

One third only of the elected members of the PCC shall retire each year. An elected member must retire at the conclusion of the third annual meeting after that at which he or she was elected. He/she can stand for re-election until he/she has served for nine years in succession. After nine years he/she will not be eligible for re-election for at least one year.

Membership of the PCC for 1986 is as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Vicar: | The Rev. J.N. Chubb |
| Churchwardens: | Mrs. E. Severn and Mr. R. Bridges |
| Readers: | Miss H. Stanton and Messrs. D. Dore, D. Rawlins and A. Taylor |
| Area Synod Representative: | Mrs. L. Mortimer |
| Deanery Synod Representatives: | Mrs. L. Mortimer and Messrs. C. Dobson and D. Dore |
| Elected Members: | Mesdames H. Bucknell, A. Davis, M. Gow, C. Hayward, M. Heaford, C. Kemmis, M. Leatherdale, M. Meredith-Smith, R. Meyerowitz, M. Nevill, H. Taylor, M. Taylor. Messrs. T. Baldwin, M. Childs, D. Lloyd, P. Revis, P. Roberts, H. Severn. |
| Deputy Chairman: | Mr. R. Bridges |
| Secretary: | Mr. T. Baldwin |

PARISH OUTING TO BRIXWORTH - 28TH JUNE 1986

This year's outing will be a trip to Brixworth, Northampton, Nicholas' former parish. The day will include a visit to the beautiful Saxon church.

The coach leaves the church at 9am and costs £4 per head. This includes drinks, but please bring your own food.

The rest of the day can be spent on a trip on the Blisworth Canal. £2.50 for adults and £1.50 for children. Those who do not wish to go on the boat can walk along the towpath and visit the canal museum.

More details will be announced and a list for people to sign is in church.

Margaret Revis

"AU REVOIR" TO SEYMOUR HARRIS AND FAMILY

On Saturday, 26th July, 1986, at 6.30pm, the institution and induction of Seymour into his new Parish in Wittersham, Kent, will take place by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Seymour first attended the Baptist Church, Teddington, but at the age of 14 he decided that St. James's was not only so much nearer (he lived in Park Road) but offered the form of service and liturgy that he preferred. He was confirmed at the age of 15 and became a regular Server at St. James's. In 1971/72 he became a Reader, seeing a great need in the Parish at the time for pastoral assistance. He responded still further to his calling by training as a Priest, being ordained as Deacon in 1975 and as a Priest in 1976. He worked with Rupert Brunt faithfully during all this time, sharing the ministry at St. James's, with Rupert to begin with and later with other readers.

He left St. James's on 18th March, 1979, having informed the Bishop that he felt called to full-time ministry. Seymour was one of the first Worker Priests in this area, being a Pharmaceutical Chemist for Boots during the week days. He was not attached to any particular church for some time, being quite happy to be used by the Rural Dean. After several visits to St. Michael and St. George, Fulwell, he was officially installed there as Priest in Charge, pending re-organisation. He gave half his week to the Parish, the other half he worked for Boots. The Parish, realizing his worth - his endless energy within the church (he always has more hours in his day than most people!) bought another day and it is only quite recently that he has been in full-time paid ministry. It has been a bumpy ride since then, with the future in the balance.

During the past 10 years, Seymour has been deeply involved with the Catechumenate from which he has derived much strength and support. He says it has shaped his thoughts and theological thinking to a large extent but in no easy fashion because it has proved to be quite a controversial issue in the Anglican Church. He feels it has opened many ecumenical roads not envisaged 8 or 9 years ago. He has been a faithful, loving servant to this community, which started at St. James's and moved to Fulwell, both as a priest and as a friend to many people who will miss him very much indeed.

A move for Seymour was inevitable but where to? After much thought he liked the challenges and problems posed in rural areas and applied for jobs accordingly. After numerous frustrations he had offers from two Bishops simultaneously and decided to take the job in Kent.

What a challenge he faces! He will be the first person to take on three Parishes (Wittersham, Stone and Ebony) as a unit, Wittersham being the larger and stronger of the three. He hopes to encourage the people especially in the smaller parishes of Stone and Ebony. Stone and Ebony have had no resident priest since 1960, so much encouragement is needed. He faces a new venture with the Church Primary School, taking assembly once a week and teaching in the upper class, as well as being Chairman of the Governing Body, an area he has not involved himself with before.

The house has a lovely natural garden which is being re-planted to contain Purdo, the dog! The Steam Railway is just up the road so that Matthew and Jonathan (who are

now 8 and 6 years old) will be happy. The local land is used for growing hops, vines and apples for various English beverages! and for pasturing sheep. Plenty to see if you pay them a visit.

Simon, who is taking his finals for a Business Studies Diploma is very interested in tourism and travel and welcomes the move into the vicinity of the Channel ports. Frances is going to stay in Hampton Hill and is looking for a post as Nursery Assistant in a primary school. Eventually she hopes to be a teacher.

I for one wish Dawn (whose role I see as vital), Seymour and Family all the best in their new venture. I am sure many of their friends at St. James's would like to say with me "We shall miss you all very much but may God bless you and keep you and make His face shine upon you and may the peace of the Lord be always with you".

If you would like to attend the ceremony in Wittersham, please put your name on the list in church and I will contact you with further details. Coaches will be leaving Hampton Hill, Fulwell and Teddington.

Yvonne Childs

* * * * *

SODIUM is an extremely active element found naturally only in combined form; it always links itself to another element. Chlorine, on the other hand, is the poisonous gas that gives bleach its offensive odour. When sodium and chlorine are combined, the result is sodium chloride - common table salt - the substance we use to preserve meat and bring out its flavour.

Love and truth can be like sodium and chlorine. Love without truth is flighty, sometimes blind, willing to combine with various doctrines. On the other hand, truth by itself can be offensive, sometimes even poisonous. Spoken without love, it can turn people away from the gospel.

When truth and love are combined however, then we have what Jesus called "the salt of the earth", and we're able to preserve and bring out the beauty of our faith.

From Australia

THE YOUNG PEOPLE of today think of nothing but themselves. They have no reverence for parents or old age. They are impatient of all restraint. They talk as if they alone know everything.

PETER THE MONK (1227)

GOD'S PROMISES

"He has given us His promises, great beyond price". Some time ago I was talking about God's promises at a study group and someone said "What *are* the promises, I don't know them". This may be the reaction of many Christians. Even if we are dimly aware of them, do they do more than scratch the surface of our spiritual consciousness or are they to us "great beyond price that through them we may come to share in the very Being of God" (2 Peter 1.4). I venture to suggest that if the latter were the case we should be very different people and Christ's church really seen to be the Body of Christ.

So we propose to seek out some of Jesus' promises from the New Testament. The promises of covenants of God in the Old Testament are a study in themselves. God has always given promises to His people, "Incline your ear and come unto me, hear that your soul may live and I will make with you an ever-lasting covenant, my steadfast sure love". (Isa. 55.3). The O.T. promises are a most rewarding source of strength, leading in logical sequence to the fulfillment of the prophesied promise of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ - God's Living Word - to abide with us.

So let us begin and where better than with the Sermon on the Mount (Mat. 5) a series of statements and attendant promises, and let us find out who Christ *promises* shall be blessed. There are many who can witness to receiving many of these promises: those whose poverty of spirit and soul *have* been enriched and restored more and more as they have sought God; the mourners who *have* felt the comfort of His everlasting arms bearing them up and giving them strength; the peaceful, the merciful, the purely good in whom we *can* recognise that they are acquainted with God; those that have stuck up for what they know to be the truth in spite of ridicule and criticism and *have* been justified.

Often a promise is preceded by an instruction *and is received on the understanding that the instruction is obeyed*. For example "Seek, and ye shall find". Some promises carry retribution. "Do not judge people - *whatever measure you deal out to others will be dealt back to you*". It is really hard to love those who are always finding faults in others. We experience this and in experiencing it *we* are judging the fault-finders instead of loving them as God loves us! How hard it is and we truly do need God's guidance and help. Belief and acceptance of the living truth of His promises give us this.

Margery Orton

MAGAZINE APPEAL

Since the last magazine appeared we have received another £22 making the total contributions £534. This enables us to close the Appeal officially for this year. We are most grateful to all those who have contributed and have thus enabled us to continue to produce the magazine in its present form. However, we feel that many of you would like to have the opportunity of contributing to the magazine's welfare on another occasion! We shall therefore, perhaps at the same time next year, launch a fresh Appeal. Your interest and action has allowed the Spire to be maintained. THANK YOU.

The Editorial Board

BOOK REVIEW - GOD OF SURPRISES

From time to time a book is published which demands wider than usual attention. God of Surprises, published by DLT at £4.95 is one such. It has been very well spoken of by Gerald Priestland, well known for his appearances on BBC TV and Radio and for his very sane writings, and Dr. Sheila Cassidy who endured imprisonment in Chile for trying to help the unfortunates of that country, and wrote a memorable account of her ordeal. The author, Gerard Hughes, describes some of the traditional approaches to God and the damaging teaching of the Church over the centuries. He is himself a Jesuit priest. "True christianity will always be critical, questioning, and continually developing in its understanding of God and human life". Not for him the Status Quo, the Establishment, unquestioned Tradition. Biblical references are numerous and apposite and he opens up areas of exploration about God and our relationship to him. His writing is full of wisdom and joy and confidence while exposing himself as one who has suffered much confusion and doubt. The book is written "especially for bewildered, confused or disillusioned Christians, who have a love-hate relationship with the Church to which they belong, or once belonged". Many people still think that Catholic priests, perhaps Jesuits especially, never suffer confusion, bewilderment or disillusion. I do". I believe that most of us will benefit enormously from reading this direct, honest book.

Nicholas Chubb

* * * * *

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms

| | | | |
|-------|----|--------------------------|------------------|
| April | 20 | Kelly Jean Fitchett | 1 Edward Close |
| May | 4 | Katherine Laude Stamford | 2 Holles Close |
| | 11 | Lindsay Kay Clifford | 59 Uxbridge Road |

Marriage

| | | |
|-----|----|---|
| May | 31 | Robert Desmond Stuart Sanderson and Ruth Elizabeth Gilman |
|-----|----|---|

Funerals

| | | | | |
|-------|----|------------------------|---------------------|---------|
| April | 18 | Frederick Stanley Webb | Laurel Dean | aged 84 |
| May | 9 | Edith Sedgewick | 24 St. James's Road | aged 88 |

DATES TO NOTE

| | | | |
|------|----|-------|---|
| June | 3 | 20.00 | P.C.C. |
| | 4 | 14.30 | MU outing to Ham Convent |
| | | 20.00 | Good News Group |
| | 7 | 10.00 | Churchyard Working Party |
| | 8 | 14.00 | Cricket Match |
| | 10 | 20.00 | Tuesday Club AGM |
| | 11 | 20.00 | Healing Ministry Tape 3 |
| | 16 | 20.00 | Hampton Council of Churches |
| | 18 | 20.00 | Good News Group Healing Tape 4 |
| | 24 | 20.00 | Tuesday Club: Talk by M. Peach of LT Lost Property Office |
| | 26 | 20.00 | Deanery Synod |
| | 28 | 09.00 | Parish Outing to Brixworth |
| July | 2 | 14.30 | MU Garden Party |
| | | 20.00 | Good News Group |
| | 5 | 10.00 | Churchyard Working Party |
| | 8 | 20.00 | Tuesday Club: Talk by R. Marlow on Air Rescue Service |
| | 9 | 20.00 | Talk on Healing - Rick Williams |
| | 15 | 20.00 | Tuesday Club: Summer Supper |
| | 16 | 20.00 | Good News Group |
| | 19 | | Hampton Hill Association Fair and Sports Day |
| | 20 | | To be kept as Patronal Festival of St. James |
| | | 08.00 | Holy Communion |
| | | 09.30 | Parish Communion |
| | | 16.30 | Special Service, Preacher: Rev. Anthony Potter, Parish Priest of St. James, Twickenham |

* * * * *

WHEN I WAS A BOY, we were taught to be discreet and respectful of elders, but the present youth are exceedingly impatient of restraint. They have execrable manners, flout authority, have no respect for their elders. What kind of creatures will they be when they grow up?

*Greek poet HESIOD
8th century BC*