

Talk about 'Out of the mouths of babes'. I went on a school trip recently with three classes of eight year olds. Several of the children I knew quite well from frequent visits into school. On the bus, amidst the excitement, and secret delving into packed-lunches at five minutes past nine, the small lad who was sitting next to me, the child of very faithful Muslim parents, asked me 'Vicar, do you believe in God?' Yes, said I, sure, trying not to be outdone by his consummate matter-of-factness. I can't remember what we talked about after that probably Arsenal's chances or what had been on 'Going Live'. Keeping up with eight year olds is no joke - believe me.

At lunch this same boy, after finishing off his substantial fare sat down beside me again on the grass while I was opening the morning's post which I had taken with me. 'I'm really glad you believe in God' he said 'because so do I Do you want a crisp?'

In the post I opened was a circular from a campaign group within the church urging me to protest at the Celebration of the Observance of Commonwealth Day to be kept in Westminster Abbey in the presence of the Queen. This circular sought to tell me why I should be outraged and scandalized by the participation in that observance of men and women of other faiths. It argued that it was a betrayal of the Queen's coronation oath and position as Supreme Governor of the Church of England.

But 'Easter' I wanted to scream. What do we gain from the insights of the Passion stories and the appearances of the Risen Christ to his friends? Surely, we find God revealing himself in the strange and different, in the life-giving and visionary, in acts and gestures affirming reconciliation and creating wholeness. At a time when war seems to have taken its course in the Middle East but peace is in no way secured how necessary are those biblical insights from both Our Lord's suffering and self-offering and in the stories of his engagement with his friends on the road to Emmaus, at breakfast on the seashore, in their frightened, exclusive huddle or in their crushing individual isolation.

But it is not only in relation to the Middle East that I recoiled in anger and despair at the exclusivity urged upon me by the pressure group in question. I want the good news of Christ's death and resurrection to be experienced among our parishioners, all of them, not just Churchy ones; that generous, life-giving freedom to be found, handled and shared by all his children.

And, quite honestly, for that I would look to my eight year old, who was happy we had a share together in God, and was happy to share his packet of crisps. That's commitment.

A Very Happy Eastertide to you.

The Right Reverend David Hope

With much joy and great expectation we welcome The Right Reverend David Hope to be the next Bishop of London. Bishop David is currently Bishop of Wakefield, his home city, and his cathedral is the very place where his faith and vision was nurtured as a boy chorister. Bishop David, who is 50 and a bachelor, studied at Nottingham University and gained a doctorate at Oxford. He served a curacy after ordination (1965) in Derby and as Chaplain in Bucharest. He was Vicar of Oxford for four years and Principal of St. Stephen's House, Oxford for six years before coming to the London Diocese as Vicar of All Saints, Margaret Street from 1982 - 1985. He was consecrated Lord Bishop of Wakefield in 1985.

Bishop David, we welcome you and assure you of our prayers and support.

Towards A Vision For London

'Seek the welfare of the city . . . and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its welfare you will find your welfare'. (Jeremiah 29 v 7)

As Church leaders working in all parts of Greater London we have met together several times in the past year to reflect on the quality of life in our city, and to discern some fundamental priorities for London at this time. We have felt the need to seek a fresh vision for our city.

Christians are called to help build the City of God in the midst of their world. With faith and unflinching love we seek to renew the face of the earth. We are therefore required to remain in the heart of daily life and all its concerns. We struggle to build a better, more just community as a means of transforming and making sacred all that God has made.

London Today

There is great potential for improving radically the quality of life in London. As well as its inherited greatness, London continues to provide abundant proof of human endeavour and creativity. A wealth of economic resources is invested in it. Its people are generally hardworking, enterprising and concerned. And yet many of us who live in London also see the severe strain and stresses of urban living. We are conscious of poverty and homelessness, of frequent family and community breakdown, of the progressive loss of shared traditional values and attitudes. A multi-racial, multi-cultural society is to be welcomed and indeed offers great enrichment. It also requires tolerance, understanding and a willingness to explore new relationships. That calls for energy, intelligence and great determination.



1. Spiritual Values

True quality of life is dependent not just on material well-being, necessary though this is, but at a deeper level, on a true sense of one's own worth. This is based on the recognition that we are each made in God's image and are unconditionally loved by God. Spiritual poverty, which frequently co-exists with material affluence, is inevitable if material wealth is seen as the only good, and economic prosperity as the only measure of human value. Fundamental to any profound regeneration of our city is a rediscovery of God in whose image we are made. In God we find the reasons for the dignity and respect which are due to all.

2. Human Dignity

Without a deep awareness of the dignity and respect due to all persons, individuals can become self-indulgent and ignore their moral responsibilities to others. If society lacks a firm moral framework, then vulnerable individuals can easily be caught up in the destructive forces of greed and envy, violence, drugs, and sexual licence.

3. Social Justice

The physical conditions of life are of great importance. For many in London they are pitifully inadequate. There are wide variations in the standard of living enjoyed by London's population of nearly seven million. A substantial minority live in squalid conditions. They inhabit areas of the city which suffer endemic and multiple deprivation. The causes of this unacceptable situation are complex and varied. The remedies are mostly difficult. They inevitably take time. In these circumstances there is a real danger of hopelessness, apathy and even despair which can frustrate every effort to bring about lasting change by individuals, communities and local and central Government agencies.

4. The Individual and the Community

We need a philosophy of life which injects hope into areas of deprivation, acknowledges the true interdependence of any human community, and the responsibility we have to one another for one another. A true Christian vision holds a balance between the freedom and initiative of the individual and the needs and requirements of the community. Neither must be allowed to exclude the other.

We believe that it is necessary for London to recover a sense of its own identity. There must be a genuine and enduring commitment on the part of individuals, communities, local authorities and central Government to realise the hidden potential of this great city.

As Church leaders we have committed ourselves to pray, to consult and to work together. We made public testimony to this at a Service of prayer held at St. Paul's Cathedral on 7 June, 1990.

We call upon all our fellow Christians in London to share a similar commitment, particularly as we embark upon the Decade of Evangelisation. We call upon them to worship together and, recognising the need of the grace of God, to witness and serve their city in Christ's name, working with other people and agencies to bring about a better quality of life and a new vision for our city. Communities such as our churches should do everything in their power to improve the environment in their local areas. Together we seek to revitalise a city in which all its citizens can take legitimate pride and find for themselves and their families a way of life that is more fully human.

Signed by the Bishop of London and many other leaders in the London area of other denominations of the Christian Church.

(Reproduced from 'Christian Action Journal' for Autumn 1990)

* * * A P C M * * * A P C M * * *

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* **SUNDAY 21 APRIL - IN CHURCH** *

* **at 11 am (after Parish Communion)** *

* **MEETING OF PARISHIONERS and** *

* **ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING** *

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* **Churchwardens to be chosen, and** *

* **Parochial Church Council Members to be elected** *

* **(Nomination Forms now available in church)** *

* **Come and hear what has been happening at St. James's** *

* **and ask questions!** *

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* **FOLLOWED BY LUNCH IN CHURCH -** *

* **PLEASE BRING A CONTRIBUTION** *

* **More details from the Vicar** *

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* * * A P C M * * * A P C M * * *

Family Mission in Salisbury

Pam, Jeremy, Hannah and I were delighted to be able to share with so many of you a little of our experience of living and 'working' as a Neo-Catechumenal Family in Mission for seven months, last year.

As I hope became clear, Australia, and Adelaide in particular, is quite beautiful. Even Salisbury is, at face value, beautiful in parts, but large parts, off the main highway, have been used by the government as a dumping ground for the poor and needy, the long-term unemployed, the single-parent and 'problem' families, and for large concentrations of immigrants who for one reason or another have just not fitted into Australian life. In other words, a typical inner-city area, but without either the outward appearance or the grinding poverty that you find, for example, in parts of London. The problems however are identical - teenage gangs, street violence, drug and alcohol abuse, marital breakdowns and a high incidence of both physical and sexual abuse.



Certainly it is not a place we would choose to live in nor indeed to bring up our children, but it is where God has called us and where he is showing us how he precedes us in everything, providing for our every need.

We went to this particular parish at the request of the Archbishop of Adelaide, the acting Primate of Australia, and were given a blessing by Robert Runcie, then Archbishop of Canterbury, prior to leaving. Our mission is to help revitalise the church in this particular place. The Rector, Munro Drysdale, was, on his own, responsible for a parish containing 54,000 people spread over an enormous area. The main church had been burnt down, the daughter church badly vandalised and covered in graffiti inside and out. The total congregation of the two churches was 15 - 20 people only. Few of the people have any connection with any christian church, although the sects are very powerful and well organised. Many of the people have had no prior contact with a church at all. It will probably take a 'Decade of Evangelism' therefore to even start to bring these people into the church!

We anticipate, therefore, leaving for Oz on or around 16th April, this time long-term although we would hope to pop back to our community periodically. Please pray for us, and the other family with us, Alex, Cynthia and Trudi.

The church has not managed to find us anywhere to live as yet, so we will let you have an address as soon as we find somewhere.

Love and Peace to you all.

The Atkinsons.

Praying for Justice and Peace in South Africa

We are all called to play some part in the struggle for justice and peace in South Africa. What is at stake is the manifestation of God's love for the world.

Different people have different gifts and we make our best contribution by making the best use of the gifts we have. As a priest and a monk I consider prayer is the most important work I have to do. I not only pray for those who are working actively to bring this change about, but also for those who are suffering on account of their involvement in the struggle; for if, as I believe, suffering is redemptive, they are making an important contribution by their suffering - in prison, or in exile or wherever, and they need support. People say that prayer may become a substitute for action; perhaps that is so but we can't dispense with prayer. Certainly prayer has to be turned into action, but action which is not rooted in prayer is not likely to be fruitful. In prayer we align our wills with God's will. He is a God of justice, so in prayer we share his concern for justice and we receive the guidance and the courage to act in the cause of justice. In prayer we receive the love without which anything we do or suffer is worthless, for we are in touch with the source of love which is God himself.

So here is my prayer for South Africa:

O Lord, thank you for this country, for its beauty, its resources, and its variety of people of all races - for their courage, their love and for their joy. Thank you for all who want to live and work together for the coming of your Kingdom here.

But there is much that is wrong - avarice, injustice, exploitation, cruelty, above all racism. So we pray for all the people of this country; for Whites - those who have the power to change things but don't use it for fear of losing their power and privileged position - or just through laziness. We pray for Blacks, for those who have worked with the system and are now well off and don't want to change things. We pray for those who are trying to change things, both from inside and outside the country, and for those who have lost hope of changing things except by violence. We pray for Coloureds and Indians and other races, torn between their desire to share white power and privilege, and their duty to share with Blacks in the Liberation Struggle. O Lord save us and help us all. Things won't come right without repentance. Help us to recognise our sins and grant us true repentance. Grant us your Holy Spirit that we may see how to bring about change in the best possible way, and with as little violence as possible. May each of us do what we can in the situation we are in and with the gifts we have got, to create peace and harmony, that all the people of this country may live fully human lives, in right relationships with you, with each other, and with all, your creation, and so may your kingdom come in all its fullness.

Father Tom Stanton

A Day in the Life of a Hospital Chaplain

Many people assume that the Chaplains in a hospital are appointed only to care for the specifically religious needs of the patients. This used to be the case until a few years ago when the numbers of patients of a particular denomination were counted and chaplains appointed for so many sessions per week to visit those in the beds.

Nowadays the reason for, and the method of, appointing chaplains is very different. Perhaps the greatest change is that it has been recognised that the staff, and that includes doctors, nurses, auxiliaries, porters, kitchen staff, secretaries and so on, also have a right to the ministry of the chaplain. So also do the relatives of patients. One only has to look at the cigarette ends outside the front door in the morning to realise just how stressful a place for visitors a hospital is. Added to that a great many smaller hospitals have been closing down throughout the country in order that resources can be put into larger District Hospitals. So when I was appointed to be the first full-time chaplain at Peterborough it was because the size of the hospitals had grown to accommodate just over 800 patients at any one time looked after by about 2,500 staff, and an indefinite number of relatives. It certainly is a full-time job since most of the patients do not stay for very long, and the aim is to allow people home as soon as possible. Most would want to recover from their illness in their home surrounded and supported by family and friends. (Here at Peterborough the Health Authority has pioneered a Hospital at Home service which means that those with some long term conditions can be nursed with special equipment provided by the Authority.)

So how do I start the day? First by meeting with one of the local parish clergy (in whose parish the hospital is) to say our morning prayers. I am fortunate in having very well appointed chapels in each of the two main units. Then there is the sifting of the new admission slips from the day before. In the case of the District Hospital these may number about 50 and the details of those who are Roman Catholics and of those who are Free Church (very important in Fenland Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire) are put into their trays for their attention later. I have to try and decide which of the others is a priority - not an easy job. Hopefully the parochial clergy will ring me and let me know when they learn someone has been admitted. Some clergy are very much better at this than others! It makes my job very much easier and serves the patients much better if this is done. Now that hospital chaplains are on bleep this is not difficult - we can be contacted anywhere provided we are near a 'phone and here there are about 1,000, I am told, in offices and wards. Or it may be that patients have asked to see the chaplain. **YOU ARE NOT BEING A NUISANCE IF YOU ASK** - in fact we know then we shall be welcomed and can say prayers, bring communion, tell you about Sunday and weekday services in the chapels, and, hopefully, take away some of the sense of isolation, vulnerability and fear.



"Cheer up Reverend. We'll have you back on your knees in no time."

As well as visiting I join in nurse education, sit on various committees and occasionally challenge managerial decisions and routines. I try to speak about the work in and around Peterborough largely to help dispel the fear of coming into hospital.

Here there are plans to develop the hospital service and I am privileged to be part of that. You may have heard that Jimmy Savile, who lives in Peterborough, hopes to raise funds to establish a Children's Hospital, run by the Health Authority, which will be a second Great Ormond Street. And next month a Macmillan Day Care Centre will be starting to take patients.

Healing is a team effort and the definition is wide and is not confined to people in beds. Here at Peterborough it is good to be recognised as part of the team and that God does have a part to play even in a market-orientated, re-shaped, under-funded, stressed N.H.S.

Nicholas Chubb

This Month We Commemorate . . . (among others)

Anselm (21 April)

Archbishop of Canterbury, Teacher of the Faith

Anselm (c1033 -1109) had, as Abbot of Bec in Normandy, written philosophical and theological books, before becoming Archbishop of Canterbury. But Anselm was more at home in a monastery than dealing with the king and his court. A sensitive and generous man, he said of his books 'I want to understand something of the truth which my heart believes and loves.'

Open House



Come and join us for a coffee and a chat on Mondays (other than Bank Holidays) from 10.30 am to Noon at Wayside, 25 St. James's Road.

One Door Closes

Sixty years ago, following the erection of Hampton Hill J. M. School, the former boys' school, built in 1868 by the first Vicar of St. James's Church, was converted to become the Parish Hall.

This year, having been acquired by the Community Care Group, it is to be further converted and extended as their new Centre, the costs being met by the Hampton Fuel Allotment Charity.

Proceeds of the Hall sale will go towards a new, smaller Hall which we hope, subject to various consents, to build adjoining the church.

More about this to follow.

Jack Gostling

Around the Spire

Congratulations to Moya Smith on being made a Reader in the field of Comparative Dental Anatomy at the University of London.

We were pleased to hear of the safe arrival of Baby Clare to Sue and John - a sister to Catherine. We wish them all every happiness.

Pip Rowett has now had his operation - a rather delicate one - and it's good to hear - and see - that he is making an excellent recovery.

Mrs. Price and Miss Smee have both recently had operations on their eyes. Both are getting on well and we hope that they continue to make good progress.

A big 'thank you' to all who made the Pre-Lenten 'Think Pink' Party such a success, despite the weather. The games were enjoyed by all and very suitable for all ages and abilities. The food was excellent: many thanks to all the cooks. The pink theme was especially noticeable in the puds!

Small and medium-sized jam jars are required for filling with jams and other preserves for the Bazaar to be held later in the year. Please place your empty jars in the box to be provided in church. Many thanks.

From the Registers - February

Baptism

3 Daniel Michael Strachan 20 Parkside

Funerals

7	Lilian Mary McCarthy	43 Pigeon Lane	Aged 65
8	Gertrude Norah Joan Lange	Orione House, Station Rd. Hampton Wick	Aged 81
22	Annie Guildford	Laurel Dene	Aged 85
25	Ronald Ernest Kern	43 St. James's Rd.	Aged 64
26	Louisa Kaye	Laurel Dene	Aged 80

Regular Weekly Services

Sunday	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Parish Communion (except usually on the first Sunday in month)
Monday to Friday	09.15	Morning Prayer
Tuesday	09.30	Holy Communion
Thursday	19.15	Holy Communion (Ministry of Healing on the first Thursday in the month)

Other Services and Dates to Note

Apr.	6	19.30	The Little Orchestra Company Concert, St. James's Church
	7	09.30	Parish Communion
		18.30	Choral Evensong
	8		The Annunciation of our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary
	14	18.30	Prayer 'n' Praise
	16	20.00	Tuesday Club: Flower Arranging, Wayside
	21	11.00	Annual Parochial Church Meeting, Church
		18.30	Choral Evensong
	22	20.00	Hampton Council of Churches, Methodist Church
	25		St. Mark the Evangelist
	28	18.30	Prayer 'n' Praise
	30	20.00	Tuesday Club:
			After What the Butler Really Saw, Wayside
May	1		St. Philip & St. James, Apostles
	5	09.30	Informal Service
		18.30	Choral Evensong
	9		Ascension Day
	12	20.00	Parish Communion
		16.00	United Service for Christian Aid Week, Methodist Church
	13		Christian Aid Week begins
		20.00	P.C.C., Vestry
		20.00	Taizé Prayer Meeting, St. Richard's Church, Hanworth
	14		St. Matthias, Apostle
19		Pentecost	



**Saint MARK
Apostle & Evangelist**