

First the Good News,

In his saffron robes and with his shaved head The Venerable Rahula cuts a dashing figure. He's not a distant Archdeacon, but a Buddhist monk in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. The temple he serves is about twelve miles from the nearest town, called Amparai. Very rural, the temple serves as a place of worship, education, entertainment and a community focus. In many ways it is a very familiar pattern, similar to thousands of rural parishes in England.

Some of Rahulas's people were faced with a major problem. They farmed a small area of land collectively. Originally they farmed maize, but the price was so low they couldn't sell it profitably and were unable to supply their most basic needs. The village had no electricity and is two miles from the only road along which buses ply. Rahula convinced the people to change to rice cultivation, which they did successfully. But rice needs a huge amount of water and although in the Monsoon season the farmers brought home a good crop, for the rest of the year they had no income. However there was a stream, some fifty yards away which ran with water most of the year. If only water could be diverted!

Rahula, the local Buddhist monk, through his friendship with the Anglican priest for the area asked the National Christian Council, a partner of Christian Aid, for some help. Help to purchase a very small pump, diesel driven, and fifty yards of small bore plastic pipe. With this loan to fund the water supply the farmers now have two crops per year instead of one and are paying back the loan from their added income.

Now the bad news: Since its independence in 1948 Sri Lanka has earned a reputation for good health care, very high literacy rates and length of life span. After it took massive loans from the World Bank, however, things have not improved, but have worsened considerably. The World Bank as a condition of lending money to Sri Lanka (and all governments) insisted that the government there remove the subsidy on fertiliser and bus transport and force farmers to plant different cash crops - like gherkins which nobody eats! Spending on health care has also been slashed as a result of the World Bank's demands, it's so-called "Structural Adjustment Programme".

Farmers are now taking their young children out of school because they can't afford hired labour; cheaper rice is now being imported in vast quantities so farmers are being turned off the land. Mortality rates are rising and so is illiteracy.

Rahula and his village farmers feel they just can't win - through careful planning and

hard work they have increased their income just above survival , but now have to pay more for school books, bus fares, fertilisers and visits to the clinic. If he had any hair on his head , Rahula would pull it out ! "Who runs the world?" is a question Christian Aid is asking in a campaign to make the World Bank more accountable for its actions to the poorest people. The World Bank gets money from you and me - the taxes we pay , but it is not accountable to us or even to Parliament. "Who runs the World?" is a good question , but the answers may not be Good News.

'If a poor person cries to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate' (Exodus 22 : 27)

Do we hear the cry of the poor? Are we compassionate? Think this Christian Aid week of what the Lord requires.

Brian Leathard

Good-bye to the Editor

For the last nine years 'The Spire' has had the benefit of the wise and judicious editorship of Ron Bridges, but, sadly Ron has decided that he must vacate his Editor's chair, which will now be occupied by Helen Taylor.

During Ron's care-taking of 'The Spire' there have been each month interesting and lovely general articles of local news as well as spiritual content, all of which are important in a Parish Magazine. Each edition has reflected the meticulous care which Ron brings to all his endeavours - we have enjoyed the illustrations, the setting out of the pages and the variety of matter. We have accepted, without much thought, I suspect, the accuracy of the information and the proof-reading. Thank you for all this, Ron, and for the many hours you have spent either on the computer, or in trips down to the printer, Norman Carter, in Teddington.

And welcome to Helen, on whom the mantle of Editor has fallen and who will, I am sure, guide the progress of 'The Spire' successfully and produce many interesting and informative editions. We would very much welcome any new members to the Magazine Committee, which normally meets on the first Monday afternoon of each month. If you feel that you could join our small, friendly group, write the occasional article or bring new ideas, please contact Helen, Brian or myself .

Margaret Taylor

The Song of the Hall

Users of the Hall unite,
To keep the Hall as clean and bright,
As possible .

And to this end there are in store
Brooms, brushes, plenty more,
Under the stairs.
So when you've danced or table tennis played,
Sweep the floor, leave chairs arrayed
Tidily.

An overflowing rubbish bin is not a pretty sight,
When you go empty it and then turn off the light
And kettle.

And after tea, when you've washed-up,
Take home the cloths to clean,
So that when next you use the Hall
Its beauty can be seen.



Christian Aid



Once again , we have the opportunity to make a significant contribution to the work of the agency which aims to help 'the poorest of the poor'. This year Christian Aid week begins on May 14th, when collectors from all the local churches will be knocking on doors in Hampton and Hampton Hill, as indeed they will also be doing throughout the country.

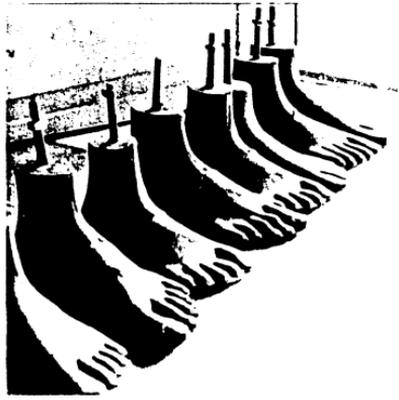
In 1994, our collectors from St. James's brought in £1600 which included £137 for a special collection to help Ruanda. Our aim then had been 2000 - perhaps in 1995 this will not seem so ambitious and we might achieve that milestone figure. Let's try!

So please may I ask you all - be generous with your money and your time. When YOUR Christian Aid collector comes round, have your envelope ready and be prepared for a short chat; it can be encouraging to meet a friendly face! We have about thirty volunteer collectors, but more are always welcome, so that existing 'rounds' can be made shorter and more streets covered. If YOU could spare a few hours to deliver envelopes during the week of May 7th and collect them the following week, please contact me - I think that you will find your efforts rewarded and appreciated, and you might even enjoy yourself !

Margaret Taylor.

The Jaipur Limb

I recently saw at an exhibition devoted to the Third World a modest stand which immediately drew my interest and attention to the wonderful concept of the Jaipur Limb. There are literally millions of land-mines still buried in many countries where there has been conflict - as many as 4 million in Cambodia, 2 million in Mozambique and unknown numbers in Angola and Kurdistan. The land still has to provide food and most of the farming is done by women and children, amongst whom occur the most devastating injuries, especially to the legs and feet - injuries which usually bring ordinary life to an end. Similarly, in urban living, thousands of people suffer by amputation, following gangrene, diabetes or other conditions which arise from inadequate public health and which are very rarely found in more developed countries.



The invention and development of the Jaipur Limb, an artificial foot, has brought new hope and new life to thousands of people, especially the poor in the Third World. The 'limb' is made of vulcanised rubber, looks extremely life-like, with well developed toes, even slight veining, and is tinted to the correct skin tone. It is attached by a screw to the existing bone by an aluminium post, the length of which is adjusted so that the leg with the 'limb' will match the natural leg in length. The fitting can be done in about fifty minutes, the patient learns to walk again and the quality of life undergoes dramatic and immediate improvement.

The Jaipur Limb, made as it is from rubber as tough as that of car and lorry tyres, is very strong, durable and waterproof. It is capable of use on hard, stony, uneven ground, or in water (as when, for instance, planting rice) and can, if desired, be worn with a soft shoe or sandal with thongs. No imported material is used and the 'limbs' are made locally by craftsmen such as wood or leather workers who can be trained quickly and simply. Fitting can also be done by people with minimum training; the whole operation is community run and based, there are no 'high-tec' operations and the 'limbs' seem to be immediately acceptable.

Kamala Achu, who works with the Jaipur Limb Foundation, told me about a famous Indian classical dancer who lost a foot in a car accident and today dances on a Jaipur 'limb'.

Margaret Taylor

For more information contact the Jaipur Limb Campaign on 0171 404 2755.

Last month's 'Spire' printed an article about Choir in Church. Here is a contribution putting another view. What do you think? All comments welcome.



The Choir and Church Music

Today the requirements of people attending a church service are very different from what was sought forty or fifty years ago. Congregations have changed from "passive worship" where they merely act as observers to active participants who take part in all aspects of the service. Music is of these the most difficult to rationalise.

Leading singing with organ alone works very well with popular well-known hymns or songs. Where it fails is that it is almost impossible to introduce new or unfamiliar music. For example, we think that singing the Kyries this Lent was unhelpful. It is very important that we do learn new hymns and songs. Therefore there must be a group of singers who have practised to give a strong vocal lead. Their most effective use would probably be sitting with the congregation.

The traditional music of the "anthem" type creates a problem. We feel that these no longer have real place in a normal Sunday service. People wish to sing to worship. They do not wish to sing by proxy. The Church has to meet many challenges in the coming years. Television, Sunday trading, leisure pursuits, sports fixtures all take people away from church. Thus the act of worship that is offered must be of a quality to make it an unmissable Sunday event. We have lost count of the times we have heard people say "Why did the choir sing so much and the congregation so little?". Or the other one, "If I wanted to listen to other people sing I'd have watched Songs of Praise".

To put it bluntly we feel that the style of music used in church has to come into line with modern musical taste. How many shops or factories broadcast "Radio 3" to their customers and staff? We are fooling ourselves if we think we can "educate" people to have a higher musical taste. They vote with their feet and stay away. This is particularly true of young people.

In conclusion we would say that the presence of a group of singers to lead the musical worship is essential. What the singers have to realise is that they are there to serve the congregation. They should be in the main body of the church as they cannot be heard in the chancel due to the poor acoustics.

Margaret and Paul Revis

Drama and the Young Church

On Sunday mornings during Lent the Young Church acted the Passion narrative. They obviously worked very hard in preparation and their performances deserve our heartiest congratulations.

I remember having to read the part of Jesus in a dramatic interpretation, I found it very difficult, maybe an adult looks upon it differently. The final portrayal of Christ at His Crucifixion was moving indeed. The congregation's participation in the jeering created a hostile atmosphere which contrasted dramatically with our Lord's loving words from the Cross. His death seemed to be the end of all things but we as Christians know better - our sights are set on the glory of Easter Day.

It is excellent that the Young Church used their talents to bring alive the final days in our Lord's life. Acting creates an image that makes us think. Thank you Stuart for all your hard work in nurturing the talent in our young people and also for making and providing the props.

Janet Jeffries

3rd Hampton Hill Brownies

Our "What I like about Brownies" was very well supported and we managed to raise the tremendous sum of £120.00 towards the use of the church hall. A thank you has to go to everyone who came along and especially to those mum's who helped to provide the refreshments and run the stalls. It was a lovely evening with everyone socialising and meeting old friends.

Two of the Brownies, Zoe and Annabel organised their own sponsored silence and raised the grand sum of £30.20. This showed great initiative and I personally felt very proud that they kept their brownies promise to "do your duty to God" in such a lovely way. I hope you all agree.

The brownies appreciate the welcome that St James's continues to offer and I hope that you will come along and enjoy any future events we may hold.

P.S. A massive thank you to all brownies and friends. We are very grateful to you.

Gift Aid

If you are a tax payer and make any single gift to the church of £250 or more, you may make that gift under the Gift Aid provisions. This enables us, on completion by you of a simple form, to claim a tax refund of the basic-rate income tax paid on the amount of the gift. On a gift of £250, the refund would be £83.33; on a gift of £300, it would be £100, and so on.

Since the recent appeal letter handed out in church, a number of donations have been made under these provisions, and these will considerably boost the amount of tax refunded to the parish when I make my annual claim to the Inland Revenue shortly.

Around the Spire

It is lovely to have so many young families in our midst at the 9.30 service. The latest addition to the rush of babies is Craig Merry, a second son for Margaret and Bill. A warm welcome to Craig and congratulations to the family.

We send our love to Chrissie Hockley who has been ill with shingles. We do hope she will soon be well enough to join us again in church.

Our love and condolences to Elizabeth Gossage whose mother Jane, died suddenly and whose mother-in-law, Jean, has just returned home after being in Kingston Hospital.

The death of Margaret Price was sad and unexpected. She was a regular member of the congregation, our thoughts are with her daughter, Lynne and family. May Margaret rest in peace.

Jill and Richard Denton would like to thank all those who have supported them with their messages of sympathy and kindness during the past few weeks following John's unexpected and sudden death. They feel much comforted and know that John will be much missed.

Thanks to the few stalwarts who cleaned the church for Easter. The floors look magnificent after being well scrubbed and then polished. The lights, too, shine out after all the dust was removed from them and other high places.

Attention All Gardeners

When planting up your garden this month, please put in a few extra flowers that we could use in church during the Flower Festival at the end of September. This will help us to keep down the cost.



Of course, we rely heavily on regular covenanted giving through our Stewardship Scheme. This giving has enabled me to make a claim for a tax refund of almost £10,000 per annum in recent years. Nevertheless, Gift Aid does enable us to have the benefit of a tax refund on occasional sizeable gifts made for special personal reasons or to meet special needs of the parish. Gift Aid donations may, of course, be made in addition to your regular covenanted giving.

When Gift Aid was introduced some years ago, the gift had to be at least £600, then that figure was reduced first to £400 and then to the present figure of £250, so making the provisions of much wider application.

If you have any queries, do ring me on 979 6865.

Ron Bridges (Stewardship Recorder)

Stewardship

Total giving for the tax year 1994/95 (from April 1994 to March 1995) was £33,90 - about 7% up on the giving for the previous tax year.

Particularly encouraging is the increase in the twelve month figure over that at the end of 1994 (£32,700 as reported at the Stewardship Review in February) as this begins to reflect the increased membership over recent months and the increased giving by some of our members.

Mothering Sunday Collection

The church looked very beautiful on Mothering Sunday, thanks to the arrangements of daffodils by the Hampton Hill Floral Art Club, and the collection for the Marie Curie Foundation and sale of daffodils after the service raised the splendid sum of £120.

Austerity Lunch

Many people enjoyed the delicious home-made soups at the Austerity Lunch on Saturday 8 April in the Church Hall. £135 was raised by this event which will go towards charities supported by the church.

Magazine Appeal 1995

Total to date - 3rd April £773

Total to date - April 1994 £875

For Your Diary



Saturday 13th May 10.30am - 12 noon

R.N.L.I. Twickenham Branch coffee morning in St. James's Church Hall.

Books, Bric-a-brac, Souvenirs, etc. for sale.

Do come along.

Wednesday 17th May 8pm

Christian Aid - Southern Asia - Carpet children.

Talk with slides under the auspices of the Women's Forum but ALL WELCOME followed by light Supper.

Saturday 3rd June

As part of the Church's celebration of Pentecost there will be a Bread and Cheese lunch at All Saint's Hampton Church Hall.

Proceeds towards a new hostel for 'Spear' housing homeless and mentally ill people.

Advance Notice

PARISH WEEKEND

February 2nd - Sunday 4th 1996

From dinner on Friday Evening to Tea on Sunday

FAIRMILE COURT

COBHAM

Total cost £55.10 per head for weekend

Cost for 24hr stay £27.55

Special rates for children

Ideas for content to the Vicar, please.

From the Registers March 1995

Baptisms

12 Joshua Daniel Clarke Shawlands, Glasgow

Funerals

6 Mary Coventry Russell Duff Taylor Longford House,
275 Uxbridge Road Aged 73

15 Neil Stuart Silver 57 Ormond Crescent,
Hampton Aged 21

20 John Christopher Denton 249 Uxbridge Road Aged 57

24 Margaret Price 11 Charles Court,
Teddington Aged 89

Book of Remembrance

Entries in the Book of Remembrance are now being dealt with by Janet Nunn and Margaret Hobbs. Forms may be obtained from Janet.

Dates to Note

May 1 **St. Philip and St. James, Apostles**

3 14.30 Womens Forum, Vivienne Prentice - Ambulance Driving in
1914/18 War, Church Hall

9 14.00 Editorial Board, 68 Park Road

14 **Christian Aid Week starts**

18.30 HCC United Service at Hampton Baptist Church, Rose Hill

15 **St. Matthias the Apostle**

20.15 Stewardship Committee, 16 Cranmer Road

17 20.00 Womens Forum, Ramani Leathard - Christian Aid, Church Hall

25 **Ascension Day**

20.00 Parish Communion

Advance Notices

June 3 'Great Banquet' Lunch HCC at All Saint's Hall

4 **Pentecost**

5 14.00 Editorial Board, 68 Park Road

7 14.30 Womens Forum, Safety in the Home, Church Hall

12 **St. Barnabus the Apostle**

21 20.00 Womens Forum, First Aid in the Home, Church Hall

24 **The Birth of St. John the Apostle**

29 **St. Peter the Apostle**

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