

APRIL 1968

# HALSALL PARISH MAGAZINE



Rector: The Rev. W. H. Bullough A.K.C. (Surrogate)  
"The Rectory," Halsall. Tel. 321.

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MR. H. GRIMSHAW, Rector's Warden. MR. H. SERJEANT, People's Warden.

Organist and Master of the Choristers.

MR. G. J. P. HUGHES, A.R.C.M., 51 Alma Road, Birkdale. Tel. 66706.

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# HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

## at St. Cuthbert's

### **Palm Sunday, 7th April**

8 a.m. Holy Communion. Preacher at 10.30 a.m. the Rev. Canon L. Hopkins M.A., B.D., Director of Religious Education for the Diocese. During the service the blessing and distribution of Palms.  
Preacher at 6.30 p.m. the Archdeacon of Liverpool.  
ANTHEM: "O Saviour of the World" (Goss).

### **Maundy Thursday, 11th April**

Sung Eucharist at 7.30 p.m.  
Preparations for Good Friday.

### **Good Friday, 12th April**

10.30 a.m. Mattins, Litany and Ante Communion.  
2 p.m. to 3 p.m. Devotions.

### **Holy Saturday**

7.00 p.m. Shortened Evensong with the Lighting of the Paschal Candle.

### **EASTER DAY, 14th April**

7.00 a.m. Holy Communion.  
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.  
10.30 a.m. The Family Eucharist  
6.30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon.

ANTHEM: "The Strife is O'er" (Ley).

### **EASTER DECORATION**

We shall be grateful if parishioners and friends would hand small donations to the Churchwardens during the services remaining before Easter. Flowers are always very costly but in spite of this it is our wish to worship God in the beauty of our Ancient Church enhanced by floral decoration at Eastertide.

The Rectory,  
Halsall,  
18th March, 1968

My dear friends,

The third Sunday in Lent is gone and it is good to report that the attendances at the Lenten services on Sundays have been quite good. We have enjoyed several excellent sermons. The Family Eucharist on the second Sunday in Lent was, of course, the highlight. What an inspiration it was to see so many Halsall families worshipping together in their parish church. The faithful and increasing parish participation in this service is presenting me with the physical impossibility of keeping the service within reasonable limits so far as the time factor is concerned. After the Confirmation when the new members of our Church along with their families join us it will be necessary for me to have assistance if the service is to be kept to a reasonable length. Isn't this a wonderful and encouraging thing for a Rector or Vicar to say these days?

By the time you read this letter we shall be approaching Holy Week. Good Friday and Easter Day. I think that most of us look forward to Easter Day as the brightest and most inspiring festival of the Church. Beautiful flowers, fresh green leaves, the atmosphere of Spring are all symbolic of the Resurrection. In the Sanctuary Easter lilies (assuming we have the money to buy them) and sprays of yew! Yew is the symbol of immortality. That is why yew trees are found in most old churchyards. As we sing the glorious Easter hymns we are sharing in the joy and triumph of the disciples on that first Easter morning, and we feel our kinship with innumerable generations of Christians who, on this day through the centuries, have experienced the joy and spiritual exhilaration which this festival creates.

It is my fervent hope that ALL our people will make a great effort to attend a Communion Service on this great day.

I wish you all a very happy Easter.

Your sincere friend,

HERBERT BULLOUGH.

### **WHAT THE CROSS REVEALS**

#### **Man at his worst : God at His best**

We are approaching Good Friday, the most solemn celebration of the sacred year. At this pre-Easter season we gather more closely around the Cross, this blessed symbol of Christ's suffering, and again contemplate its mysteries and significance.

The Cross is, of course, an amazing paradox—both the abiding shame and the eternal glory of the world. It is a glaring expression of human folly, yet it is God's final word of wisdom. It speaks of human weakness, yet gives evidence of divine might. It is an unsightly monument of cruel destruction, yet it towers majestically o'er the wrecks of time. It makes articulate the cry of pain, despair, death, and yet resounds with exaltation, joy unspeakable and life eternal.

John Milton celebrated the birth of Jesus in his glorious ode, 'On the Morning of Christ's Nativity', but when he made the attempt to write a companion poem on Jesus' death, he gave it up. Among his works is to be found the incompleated beginning, with a note appended: 'This subject the author finding to be above the years he had when he wrote it, and nothing satisfied with what was begun, left it unfinished.' What person seeking to express the meaning of Christ's death does not share Milton's despair! Perhaps we had better let the Cross speak for itself.

The Cross speaks of the worst in man and yet awakens the best in him. The cruelty and injustice of the Crucifixion is a commentary on the worst man is

capable of doing to the choicest Spirit that ever visited this earth. There the full measure of man's sin and degradation stands revealed. What happened on the Cross has been called 'the loneliest death in all history.' The nation to which Jesus belonged rejected Him; the religious scorned Him; Roman soldiers insulted Him; His friends forsook Him. He was alone—until His heart broke in that desolate cry, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?'

Sinful man did that. And yet man, today, makes light of sin. 'Evil is not real,' he says, 'but only the shadow cast by good.' Men may seek to belie it with optimistic expressions, but the fact remains that sin is a devastating power; it impels man to do his worst; it crucified the Son of God.

But this is only half the story, for the Cross of Christ, more than any other influence in history, has elevated and dignified man's sense of his own essential worth. Man, according to the New Testament, is the brother for whose sake Christ died. The great seventeenth century humanist scholar, Marettus, as a fugitive from France, fell ill in Lombardy, and, looking like a vagabond in rags, asked doctors for help. The physicians discussed his case in Latin, not realising that this apparent pauper could understand their learned tongue. 'Let us try an experiment with this worthless creature,' they said. Then, to their amazement, the 'worthless creature' spoke in Latin: 'Will you call worthless one for whom Christ did not disdain to die?'

Truly the Crucifixion of Christ that reveals man at his worst makes man believe in himself at his best. The Cross—amazing paradox!

The Cross speaks of the worst that happened to Jesus, and yet bears witness to the best that happened to Him. When Jesus was a boy in Nazareth the Jews broke out in insurrection barely five miles away. Referring to this, the historian Josephus tells us that 2,000 were crucified by the Romans along the roadside. Jesus must have been familiar with the barbarity of crucifixion. No wonder He prayed, 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me.'

Death by crucifixion was the worst that could happen to anyone in the Roman world, and yet Jesus walked straight to it with open eyes: 'I lay down My life . . . no man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.' Although it meant certain death, 'He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem'; He challenged the unfair business practice of the Temple and overturned the tables of the money changers; He prayed in Gethsemane when He might have run away. He knew that the most appalling experience of the Cross was the best thing that could happen to Him. It was His supreme chance to get at the heart of men. How could anyone know then that 2,000 years afterward millions would be singing, 'In the Cross of Christ I glory,' that millions would seek, and not in vain, that Cross for deliverance, healing, peace and forgiveness?

The cry of Robert Browning, "Sudden the worst turns best to the brave," aids us in our contemplation of the Cross. We picture Christ, with stern face, going up to embrace the Cross—to face the dreadful ordeal. And the worst happened. Yes, but the worst was transformed into the best! It meant the world's salvation. The Cross—amazing paradox!

The Cross speaks of the most crushing defeat of righteousness, and yet it is the symbol of the greatest victory righteousness ever had. To the first disciples the event we shall be celebrating on Good Friday represented colossal failure. On Palm Sunday Jesus journeyed round

the brow of Olivet to the accompaniment of palms and hosannas, but by Friday the crowd, urged by the religious leaders, were crying, 'Away with Him!' and 'Crucify Him!' According to the Roman world, He had failed.

Jesus trusted the disciples to be the nucleus of the coming Kingdom of God, but one betrayed Him, another denied Him, and they all fled! To His friends, and followers, He had failed, indeed, we are told that Peter followed to see the end. Hence the Cross, on the one hand, was a complete and awful failure, but out of that failure came the most impressive and moving power in man's experience. Defeated righteousness found consummation in glorious triumph. See how it worked out. Pilate sat in judgment upon Jesus. But did he? Now the world knows that Pilate sat in judgment upon himself. Did Judas betray his Lord? History tells us that Judas betrayed himself.

If the future belonged to unrighteousness, then all our hopes for a fairer world would be futile. But the Cross reveals something much more powerful and abiding at the heart of the universe; it reveals everlasting love, righteousness and truth, things that so often seem to fail, yet which are ultimately bound to triumph.

From thence a paradox  
Which comforts while it mocks.  
Shall life succeed in that it seemed to fail?

Yes, Christ knew that to fail as He did would be the surest way to succeed. 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.' So He failed. They crucified Him on Calvary, and thereby left in His possession a power they did not reckon with—the power of love laying down its life; a power that has moved and will yet transform the world.

George Tywell, a brave soul who fought a hard battle for truth against many foes, wrote: 'Again and again I have been tempted to give up the struggle, but always the figure of that strange Man hanging on the Cross sends me back to my task again!'

The impossible . . . is utterly reasonable

## THE HARD FACTS OF THE EASTER STORY

### A dilemma for the Sceptic

Doubt about the historical facts is generally thought to be the greatest bar to the acceptance of the Resurrection story today. How can the dead live? Who rolled away the stone? In what form did the Risen Christ appear? These are the kind of questions usually asked. The answers given by non-Christians, and it must be admitted—by some professing Christians, are sceptical where they are not in definite opposition to traditional records.

Of course, the argument cannot be allowed to end there. The traditional beliefs had widespread consequences. How are these explained if the facts are not as they were stated in the New Testament? No one will deny that the disciples were a disillusioned, defeated band of men on Good Friday. All—literally all—was lost. They could think of no future except a return to their former life, blotting out the events of the past three or four years.

Then something happened which completely changed them. Nothing trivial would have made the slightest difference; of this we can be certain. Even scepticism must allow that. The cause was at least as great as the effect. Here were men who within a very brief space of time would turn the Roman Empire upside down, and face dangers and difficulties and death without flinching, when all they had to do to save themselves was to deny the claim Christ is Risen. Indeed it was simpler even than that: they had only to say nothing.



In this lies the dilemma and Christians must insist that it be faced. If Christ be not risen from the dead, can we give one good reason why the disciples should have changed from being cowering fugitives, as they were on the Day of Crucifixion, into the most courageous band of adventurers (for the same lost cause) as they were on Easter Day and ever afterwards?

In short, remove the obstacle of the Resurrection by denying it, and you are left with the Himalaya of all religious phenomena, the rise and spread of the Christian Church. Some adequate historical explanation must be found, some cause consistent with the effect, if we are not to pass from the quagmire of doubt to the quicksands of despair.

No one would want to minimise the challenge to belief which the Resurrection must continue to be to men and women brought up against a background of today's scientific knowledge, although there should be no particular difficulty for anyone who has already accepted the greater miracle of the Incarnation. If He were indeed God in the flesh (and what Christian is there who denies that?) the subsequent miracles, including the Resurrection, should not prove too great an obstacle for faith.

Historical difficulties are not, however, the only ones. Nor, for many today, are they the greater one. Fundamental to all thinking since the Renaissance has been the conviction that all life advances. There may be setbacks here and there, some small, some great: but in spite of these life is moving forward. Two world wars and all the horrific nuclear forces let loose upon the world of men have not reversed this conviction. All life is moving forward, each step following upon the last, deliberately, inevitably and cumulatively.

The Resurrection affronts this state of mind on two important counts. It has no precedent, nor is it repeated. Its oneness, to use Emil Brunner's ugly but meaningful term, condemns it, as the Cross is condemned to the modern mind. It admits of no rational explanation, simply because there is nothing like it by which it can be compared or tested. Its uniqueness is its condemnation.

Then again, there is nothing gradual about the Resurrection. It happened, as it were, without rhyme or reason, instantly. It was not subject to "the inevitability of gradualness." This, too, is totally foreign to the rational outlook which predominates today. Here is the "Quantum Theory" of the spiritual world—a movement from one realm of existence to another, without graduation through any intervening stages.

This is the essence of Christian thinking. The world is not governed by law, but by Personal control. The impossible is not only possible but utterly reasonable. The supernatural becomes the key and elucidation of the natural.

All this gives the depth of meaning behind St. Paul's great words: "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into His death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life." We rise with Christ, not from bad to not-so-bad then to good, to better, and to best: but to "newness of life," instantly. To quote Brunner again: "All continuity from one to the other, by successive states of realisation, is excluded. This event comes exclusively from God's side and not from ours."

## NETWORK

### RHODESIAN PUZZLE

Sanctions aimed at Mr. Smith's government have had side-effects on the Church. After UDI had been declared the USPG was only allowed to send money to maintain its current work in Rhodesia, and then only up to three-quarters of the comparable figure for 1965. No grants for capital purposes or for expansion of the Society's work were allowed.

This particularly affected the Church's work among the Africans. At the Gwaai mission, for instance, Canon

Francis Boatwright found himself with no chance to build the needed accommodation for his schools there, and his church only half finished. Since the restrictions no progress has been possible.

February brought the good news that the British Government had relaxed its restrictions on USPG and similar organisations. We were told that we might increase the amount of our sterling remittances, returning to the level of maintenance grants we had reached in 1965. We were also permitted to apply to send additional funds to meet capital expenditure for hospitals and schools.

This could have meant a great deal. But as these words were sent to press, the execution of the three Africans whom the Queen had reprieved put another big question-mark against the future. It seems that helping Rhodesia is going to be a puzzle for many months to come.

## THE UNSATISFIED SPIRIT

**The Revd. David Whitaker will shortly be returning home after five years as a missionary in Lesotho**

It has been pointed out—correctly—that the African has been, and still is, essentially, filled with 'Spirit'. Africans have so much of it that it overflows into the trees, rocks, rivers and animals that surround them. One and all they know they are humble parts of life and that in order to get through their trembling day they are in constant need of support from a power greater than themselves.

Hence their elaborate rituals, strict codes of behaviour, colourful ceremonial and social ethics. Moreover, they are capable of experiencing spiritual truths and holding fast to them with a faithfulness and tenacity worthy of an early Christian martyr.

Think for instance of the national near-suicide of the Amaxosa people in the last century. On the word of a mere girl who, like Joan of Arc, heard Voices and dreamed dreams and whom the witch doctor prophet declared inspired, they killed all their domestic animals in a dream promise that once they had done that, their dead ancestors would return to life and help them drive the White man into the sea. They observed the vow faithfully but nobody rose from the dead and the whole nation nearly perished of starvation.

This illustrates how great is the African's capacity and need for a lived and living faith. Are we Christians giving him one? My friend Walter Goodall, priest of Mhales Hoek, in southern Lesotho, wrote in a recent newsletter: "It is to be doubted whether any of us have touched the deepest springs of African life."

Partly, of course, this is because we have presented a religion on western lines. We have a western liturgy, western hymns, western forms of church government. The rise of the very strong African sects like the Zionists and Ethiopians which provide what they call an African religion for African people is a standing rebuke to our failure. Many of these sects exist because we have failed to make real to Africans the true riches available within Christ's church.

Our weakness is that we have not convinced people of the fact of sin, we have not given them a robust devotional life as distinct from enthusiasm for church functions, we have not shown people how to give, we have failed to commend Christian marriage in the face of tribal customs.

### Dual Personality

Why have we failed? Is it just because the faith we present has a foreign look about it? In a profound sense every man has two halves to his being: he is not so much one person as two trying to act in unison. There is the rational, calculating, acutely reasoning and determined half and, joined to him like a shadow, is his dark

brother, the natural, instinctive, intuitive half.

European, scientific man—and this must include us missionaries who breathe the same bright air—has for generations (indeed since the industrial revolution) neglected the things of the spirit: the dark brother within lies close to death. That is why having discredited the African way of living, we have not succeeded in passing on to him a way of life which satisfies the deepest needs of his nature.

We offer him the over-intellectualised Faith which is all we have, but he is not impressed. He sees (he is very observant) the shallowness of our spirituality. The response is first to the person, then to the faith he proclaims.

Hitherto the activity of the Body of the church has consisted too much of church going and class-going in which a "professional" stood before the "troops" and told them things. The church must now be the living organism it really is.

Missionaries from England should be fewer and better and preferably with teaching ability and real humility. The church here should take the risk of Africanising itself more rapidly, retaining a few white people as advisers in the background. In the meantime press on with greater lay-participation at all levels and a search for African ordinands.

### WHAT PRICE?

I wonder how many times a day you use the word "Price"—"What's the price of this?" . . . "Prices keep going up" . . . "What sort of price had you in mind, sir/madam?" . . . "that's too high a price for me . . ."

Of course different people have different ideas of how prices should or should not be fixed. For instance, an Arab thinks that the price of an umbrella depends on whether it's raining or not. Obviously, if it is, you'll want an umbrella and the price'll be high. But if it's summer, naturally you can buy one (after a bit of bargaining) for a song. And, if you've been to the East, you'll know that one of the major activities is bargaining, arriving at a compromise between what you're asked and what you feel you ought to pay . . . a fair price.

Here at home we're more prosaic and prices are fixed. You can gaze in the shop window and look at the price tags and wonder whether you can afford to buy; or whether you must be content with window-shopping.

Now it seems to me that some sort of evil genius has got into the world's shop window and played a huge joke—rather an evil joke on us all. He's changed round the price tags and muddled them all up. Then he has gone away and rewritten the Beatitudes . . . you know those bits in the Sermon on the Mount that begin "Blessed are they . . . then there's a whole list of them. The evil version goes something like this . . . "Blessed" . . . (no, let's say "Happy").

Happy are the pushers: for they get on in the world.  
Happy are the hard-boiled: for they never let life hurt them.

Happy are they that complain: for they get their own way in the end.

Happy are the blasé: for they never worry over their sins.

Happy are the slave drivers: for they get results.

Happy are the knowledgeable men of the world: for they know their way around.

Happy are the trouble makers: for people take notice of them.

I suggest some straight thinking about this. We've got to ask ourselves, and then ask others, "What do I really value?" "What values do I want to tell my children are really worth striving for and maintaining?" Do I know what values Christ held up as genuine and lasting? How are they to be got and who are the happy people in Christ's list?

So here's a simple thought for the week . . .

"How does my price list of values compare with Christ's?"

### 1st HALSALL SCOUT GROUP NEWS

Our Spring Dance held on February 23rd, was once again a very successful event and was most generously supported. The net proceeds of £35 11s. 6d. was very encouraging, and thanks to all members of the Committee was a most enjoyable evening.

We hope to hold three Dances each year, Spring, Autumn and New Year, and perhaps you will make a note of our next one on Friday, October 18th, when we have a return visit of the Greenspots Dance Band, who entertained us so ably last October.

During the Easter holidays the Scouts and Cubs will be visiting you for your Bob-a-Jobs, and we do hope you can find the Boys lots of Jobs for lots of Bobs. This is a once yearly effort by the boys themselves to show their initiative, and to encourage them to contribute to their own Movement. Please do sign the card which every boy has and must produce.

The Annual General Meeting will be held in the School Hall on Thursday, 25th April, at 7.15 p.m., if you would like to attend we will be most pleased to see you, and will welcome any suggestions or criticisms you may have.

P.R.S.

### THE MOTHERS' UNION

On Tuesday evening, 2nd April, at 7.30 p.m., we look forward to the U.S.P.G. Area Secretaries visit. Mr. Hambrey will talk to us about the present situation in the missionary work of the Church and show us the great missionary film on Bishop Trevor Huddleston—"The White Missionary". I hope there will be a very good attendance.

### SANCTUARY FLOWERS

Easter Day April 14—The Congregation.

April 21—Mrs. W. White.

April 28—Miss Mawdsley and Mrs. Parker.

May 5—Mrs. H. Serjeant and Mrs. H. Banks.

### SIDESMEN'S ROTA

April 7—E. Serjeant, D. Swift, J. Cheetham, H. Gaskell, 14—H. Bakwin, W. White, P. Avnsley, N. Britnell.

21—R. Heaton, D. Colley, T. Swift, T. Hunter.

28—R. Lewis, H. Rimmer, C. Shacklady, J. Balmer.

May 5—S. Porter, S. Park, P. Saunders, T. Grimshaw.

### SERVERS' ROTA

April 7—8.00 a.m. Peter Balmer.

14—7.00 a.m. Jim Heaton.

—8.00 a.m. John Gaskell.

—10.30 a.m. Harold Grimshaw, Malcolm Serjeant.

21—9.00 a.m. Michael Lewis.

—6.30 p.m. Brian Heaton.

28—8.00 a.m. John Pounds.

—10.30 a.m. Raymond Juba, Roger Dutton.

May 5—8.00 a.m. Tony Gaskell.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The cloaks worn now by the two assistant head choir boys have been given to St. Cuthberts' Church Choir by Mrs. P. Trower, in memory of the late much loved Alfred Percy Trower. We are very grateful to Mrs. Trower for this beautiful gift.

### BURIAL OF THE DEAD

Mar. 1—George Joseph Sutherland, aged 72 years, of 107 New Street. (Cremation).

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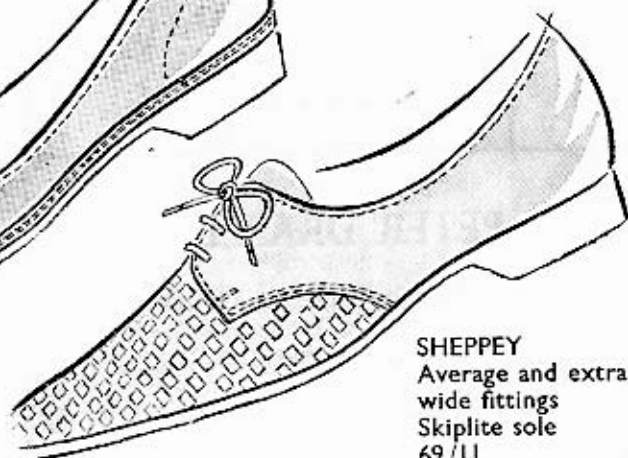


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