

HALSALL PARISH MAGAZINE



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Rural Dean of Ormskirk
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The Rectory,
Halsall,

DISCIPLESHIP

My Dear Friends,

What a wonderful Harvest Festival we had! Excellent congregations, a fine children's gift service, a great anthem by the choir, and at the end of the day the gifts of our faithful people totalled £470 (Gift Day Envelopes £362, Church Collections £108) This was truly magnificent and I want to thank you all sincerely for the superb effort. As usual our church looked beautiful and we are very grateful to those who year by year give of their time to decorate at Harvest Festival.

Before we know where we are the Bazaar will be upon us. It is so encouraging to see and hear of all the efforts being held for this grand event. I hope you are all saving up for it by obtaining your thrift tickets. They are a wonderful help to you and to the church. I look forward very much to seeing you on the 27th. Bring a big basket there are more stalls than ever this year.

Confirmation classes will commence on Sunday, 7th November at 2.15 p.m. Candidates must be 11 years of age. The Confirmation is on Whitsun Day 1972. I am looking forward to meeting a fine group of our young folk.

On Sunday, 28th November, throughout the Diocese there is a great interchange of preachers at the morning and evening services. This is St. Andrewstide and the emphasis will be on "Missionary work". At the service on this day the preachers will be The Revd. B. W. Harris Vicar of Dalton, at the morning service, and the Revd. D. W. Post, Vicar of Lathom at the evening service. On this day we ask for your full support and will you please bring in your missionary box and hand it to the churchwardens in order that the boxes may be opened and the money sent off to the Missionary Society without delay.

Finally there are two services the dates of which I ask you to note On Sunday, 12th December, the children of our Day School will present a Children's Christmas Service at 2.30 p.m. On Sunday, the 19th, there is a Carol Service at 3 p.m. to which all Free Masons in this area have been invited. The church will be packed to capacity and you should come early to get a seat. Our own carol service will be held in the evening of this day.

We are moving into a very busy and exciting month with much to follow. I know I can count on your fullest co-operation.

God bless you all,

Your sincere friend,

Herbert Bullough.

There is a great deal which goes by the name of Christianity in this country today which has little to do with Christianity. Churches are numerous and congregations in many are large and impressive. But what the Lord of the church yearns for is that intimate fellowship with Him, by those fully and absolutely committed to Him, and this is discipleship. What we have in our Churches today is a great deal of easy-going 'Christianity' but little of discipleship, a great deal of "Churchianity" with a sentimental haze of vague piety. Discipleship is the difference between this everyday common, ordinary Christianity and being out and out for Christ. God has had enough of Christians who will go to Church on Sundays, pay their Church dues, attend baptisms, weddings and funerals but who fail to stand for Christ in the world by complete, total surrender. Discipleship is more than being baptised and confirmed and regular attendance, it is more than just receiving Christ but following Him, "going on" in Him, and growing into maturity in Him.

The call of God today is for responsible and ordained leadership for the leadership of laymen who are wholly committed to Christ, who, therefore, allow His will rather than public opinion to guide them. The call is for men and women who will accept discipleship and be "the light of the world, the salt of the earth" with all the involvements. The call is for Christians who will be faithful in whatever situation they find themselves in the world and who will care for neither public praise nor public blame, but the glory of God, the extension of His Kingdom and obedience to His will.

The disciples of Jesus commended in the Bible were ordinary people, and those who qualified (and who still till tomorrow will qualify), for the Kingdom of God, were ordinary daily workers—servants, householders, porters and stewards, ploughmen and sowers, women at their baking and at their sewing, civil servants and lawyers. These did not go out of their way to become Christians, they found their discipleship just where they were—that was in the doing of their daily work. Religion (and here Christianity) is not a thing set apart, in a special region of experience, to be taken as an "extra" not in the regular curriculum of life, but concerns the whole of life. The place of religion is not in one's extra hours, but in one's working hours. It is as we understand this that we accept that faith is not just a religious exercise, but also an economic one and that work is not just a matter of economics but of faith. It is then that work and personal relationship in work, derives meaning and motivation from what one believes. The disciple cannot be an authentic member of a Church in isolation from the work he does in the world. If he is a businessman, the test of his discipleship is not so much

the way he gives his money as the way he makes his money. It is because we are not Christians that even the labourer who claims to have been baptised yet needs to be taught the dignity of labour. For the disciple, he works and worships as to the Lord, and work itself becomes worship and every thing done is that God may be glorified.

Discipleship is costly, because Christianity is an arduous costly business. It involves hardship—if **any man does not deny himself, take up his cross and follow after me he cannot be my disciple.** These are words of Jesus Himself and there is no short cut to discipleship. Christianity may involve hardships and difficulties, trials and burdens, but they are in the purpose of God for the growth of the Christian, and God stakes so much on us that we may wade through these overcoming them, being more than conquerors to his praise and glory. Discipleship may bring hardship and even hatred for the doctor, or lawyer or teacher or businessman who prefers to follow his Christian convictions rather than compromise and follow the way of others which may be easier and less costly. It is not easy to walk in the counsel of the wicked, not to stand in the way of sinners, not to sit in the seat of the scoffers, but it is just that uneasy way that discipleship calls for and those who do the will of God, delighting in his law are the only ones that will be blessed and will inherit the Kingdom of God. Through the path of discipleship, our lives become disciplined and transformed and wholly harnessed to, anchored and rooted in God.

WHAT SORT OF A CHURCH

The church is a body—every limb an organ a part of the whole, each dependent on the other for its own life, effective only in so far as it is a living part of the whole. In our church (and in many churches) we are nothing of the sort in fact, we are a collection of individuals together in a building about as closely knit together as a box of matches. But the world can only see God when it sees Him embodied in the church—no wonder it does not see him today. Now, we often acknowledge our lack of fellowship—meaning that we don't know each other. I believe that a much more fundamental cause of our failure to be the body of Christ is our extraordinary superficial idea of worship. We think of the church as a place to go to (or stay away from, when as individuals we have other things to do): a rather refined form of entertainment, to be appreciated or otherwise as circumstances demand. What a travesty of the truth! The church is a body of people who are called by God to work and to worship until His kingdom is established in the world. It is work in the world that counts, but it is worship in the church that builds the body to do the work; and worship is more important than fellowship. When strangers enter our church are they amazed by our complete absorption as one body in worship? When you come to church are you just an individual present with a lot of other

individuals or are you conscious of being an integral part of a living body. Even if you don't know other people you can be so absolutely involved in the same task that your common 'obsession' has made you one. Unhappily it is rarely so.

Symptomatic of our lack of unity in worship is the pathetic attempt that some congregations make to sing—even well known hymns. If we are similarly lazy or pre-occupied with our own thoughts, in the prayers of the church, or in listening to hear God's will for His people, no wonder there is no sense of belonging or commitment to each other, and therefore no conscious membership of each other in the world in which we are called to witness.

We are members one of another—to be absent from worship is to maim the body at worship, to be present and remain passive is little better.

THE GREAT DIVIDE

Our world is full of great divides: the West and Russia, Russia and China, Jew and Arab, Christian and non-Christian, employers and their workers, young and old. In each case on both sides, are people basically alike, who mean well, who are human, who love and laugh, hate and cry and die . . .

Yet something is lacking. The people on one side cannot really meet those across the chasm, they cannot talk seriously together, look each other in the face and understand.

They may speak or make speeches; they may shout abuse and repeat the slang and technical terms that form their minds. But nothing gets across, the opposites cannot communicate. Trust, discussion, agreement, living together in love or even common sense is quite out.

Is not this lack of communication one major cause of war and international strife; of family rows and the tensions of youth; of strikes; and of the failure of the Church to say anything to those outside?

You are a Christian young person. You have non-Christian friends. Between you there is much in common; youth, a similar education, job, hobbies; fashions in clothes and hair, tastes in books and records. You can talk of most things till the cows come home and meet the other's point of view with deep understanding. But the one thing you have to get across as a Christian—your faith—at that point you stick, you fail, words will not come and would not work if they did. You, even as a teenager, cannot communicate across the great divide between Church and world.

Part of the trouble is that few of us know how to put our faith in words others will grasp. Maybe we even find it very difficult today to discover words that bring home to us what is deepest in our hearts. Certainly you or I can hardly speak of our faith without using words like God or Christ. Yet these terms clearly do not communicate to others, or say anything real, or they only say what we do not mean.

So if we cannot cross the great divide in words, can we not communicate in some other way? Think of your closest friends. When you first met them, could you really get across what you wanted to say at once, in all cases? Or were you for a long time hesitant, shy, tongue-tied, talking at cross purposes, often tense, misunderstanding the strangeness in another person as they misunderstood the strangeness in you. Somewhere most of us find life like this. Quite often light breaks, the penny drops and we warm to each other, long before words communicate successfully between us. But often the darkness remains and we never seem to know deeply the people we live alongside.

Perhaps this is the situation of Christians today. For years we live as good friends with non-Christians and can communicate with them about everything—except our faith. Occasionally we do cross the Great Divide but often not.

It is difficult to point to a way forward but I do believe and sometimes sense that God is already in my non-Church friends. Do you find this too?

HALSALL AGRICULTURAL DISCUSSION SOCIETY

The time for our first Autumn meeting is fast approaching and what an important one it is. We are to have a visit from Mr. J. S. Robertson, National Vegetable Engineering Specialist of Cambridge. Mr. Robertson is a very high powered speaker and I earnestly request all our farmers to support this meeting. Please make it widely known and encourage your friends. The date is

WEDNESDAY, 24th NOVEMBER
7.30 p.m. in THE SCHOOLS

Don't forget—the speaker is coming from Cambridge!!
H.B.

ST. CUTHBERT'S GUILD

The next meeting of the Guild will be on Tuesday, 9th November, when Mr. A. Y. Pedlar will give a talk on Clowning and he will demonstrate his talk. We look forward to a full attendance of our members.

SERVERS' ROTA

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|--------|------------|--|
| Nov. 7 | 9.00 a.m. | Raymond Juba. |
| 14 | 8.00 a.m. | Please Note Peter Balmer. |
| 21 | 8.00 a.m. | Tony Gaskell. |
| | 10.30 a.m. | FAMILY EUCHARIST. Michael Lewis, Stephen Dutton. |
| | 6.30 p.m. | David Stopforth. |
| 28 | 8.00 a.m. | John Gaskell. |
| | 10.30 a.m. | David Stopforth, Christopher Pimlott. |
| Dec. 5 | 9.00 a.m. | Malcolm Serjeant. |

SIDESMEN'S ROTA

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|--------|---|
| Nov. 7 | B. Heaton, J. Gaskell, R.H. E. Blackhurst, E. Orritt. |
| 14 | G. Porter, S. Park, J.H. J. D. Grimshaw, R. Dutton. |
| 21 | E. Grimshaw, D. Sephton, J.R. J. Cheetham, H. Dean. |
| 28 | T. Swift, T. Hunter, H.S. P. Ainsley, R. Gaskell. |
| Dec. 5 | H. Grimshaw, M. Manners, R.H. W. Pounds, J. Halsall. |

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

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|--------|-------------------|
| Nov. 7 | Mrs. L. Heaton. |
| 14 | Mrs. T. Hunter. |
| 21 | Mrs. Kniveton. |
| 28 | Mr L. Huyton. |
| Dec. 5 | Mrs. N. Britnall. |

HOLY BAPTISM

"Received into the family of Christ's Church"

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|---------|--|
| Oct. 10 | Sally Anne, daughter of Michael James and Angela Christine Yule, of 35 Renacres Lane, Halsall. |
| Oct. 10 | Janine Elizabeth, daughter of Derek Barry, and Elaine Eileen Russell, of 1 Chestnut Close, Summerwood Lane, Halsall. |
| Oct. 24 | Michael John, son of Colin John and Christine Armstrong, of School House, Halsall. |

HOLY MATRIMONY

"Those whom God hath joined together"

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| Oct. 2 | William Price, of 47 Redcat Lane, Burscough, and Mary Louise Dutton, of 62 Summerwood Lane, Halsall. |
| Oct. 23 | Roger John Comfort, of 107 Prescott Road, Ormskirk, and Diane Ainscough, of 93 Carr-Moss Lane, Halsall. |

CHRISTIAN BURIAL

"In sure and certain hope"

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|---------|--|
| Oct. 9 | Marion Bolton, aged 47 years, of New Hill House Farm, Altcar, (Cremation). |
| Oct. 11 | Annie Harriet Blundell, aged 84 years of 114 Moorhey Road, Maghull |

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