

HALSALL PARISH MAGAZINE



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Rural Dean of Ormskirk
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Renovations

The Rectory,

Halsall,

23rd August, 1971.

My Dear Friends,

How conscious we all are of the fact that we are in the midst of "The Harvest", I find myself listening to all the weather forecasts, watching the progress field by field, concerned if clouds roll in from Ainsdale across the Moss, anxious if I see a combine harvester out of action. I seem to think of nothing else only "The Harvest." Crops and combining, straw and baling, Harvest Festival with rousing hymns, church gay with flowers and fruit—at any rate it is right to be thankful. Is this all there is to Harvest?

When men knew little about the science of the soil and the husbandry of crops but much about the uncertainty of harvest and possible shortages, having completed their feeble sowing they turned to God and prayed for a good harvest.

It may be argued that they worked harder and prayed harder—and got less. While we, understanding more, work less and pray less, yet fare far better—and therefore more techniques, more skill and more "know-how", are far more valuable than believing and praying.

It is true that our forefathers understood less than we do. It is true that in many ways we are better off in living, in comfort, and in leisure. True our forefather's lot was a simple and a harsh one compared with ours.

But the gain is not so completely one-sided.

One thing they understood which gave them an attitude of fortitude and strength and homeliness and humility, which we have so greatly lost and so greatly reduced our stature in losing, they, because of the uncertainty of their lot, understood well their dependence on their friends and family and God.

This is something we have greatly lost. We think we can stand on our own feet. We can be independent. We may even like to be independent and even regard it as a very great virtue! Some even sneer at the Christian faith and talk of people being unable or unwilling to stand on their own feet and need a spiritual and mental prop. Yet never has there been so much personal loneliness and isolation as now, so much mental sickness as is now found amongst us.

Of course there is a place for independence. But it is neither the final stage of growth nor the sign of full maturity—which many suppose it to be.

Independence is but a stage to maturity—a child must learn to walk, and later grow away from parents if he is to be healthy and strong. A young man must learn his trade or profession and not forever lean on his seniors. A young wife must learn a certain independence even in her home and not forever rush back to mother or flop around the neck of her husband. We must discover for ourselves an independence, so that we may have a personality and backbone and character. Yet this does not make the full and rounded personality.

Our forefathers were, as a matter of fact, far more self-supporting and therefore basically more independent than we are. They grew most of what they ate and clothed themselves chiefly with what they could make.

We, in complete contrast, are utterly dependent—on milkman and grocer, baker and tailor and plumber and coalman and electrician, the water board, the oil wells of America, the wheat from Canada the meat from New Zealand, and so on and so on.

Our forefathers knew both their real dependence—and interdependence—and they were right. We may appear to have our independence and even boast of it and—forget our complete dependence—and we are wrong.

To realise and accept our dependence is to accept the truth and it has in it both humility and humanity. And it takes away our pride. It helps us to look with understanding and affection and appreciation on our fellow men.

Make no mistake, we are members one of another and to realise it helps us both to understand and to find brotherhood.

And what of our dependence on God—that which so often we appreciate least? In spite of our skill, our know-how, our organisation—if the mind refused to function or become distorted; if affection and understanding withered in the human heart; if the seed remained cold and dead in the ground; if the trees and herbs did not blossom and fruit; if the grass refused to nourish the cattle; if the waters ceased and the sun did not shine; if the vast benevolence which daily surrounds our lives, gave place to a vast malignity—what then?

How independent are we really of that benevolence we term God? We are dependent every moment of every day.

Let us acknowledge this when the opportunity affords as it does every Sunday. No doubt many will do so at our Harvest Festival services. Oh! how we miss them, Sunday by Sunday.

God Bless you all,

Your sincere friend,

Herbert Bullough.

GIVE US OUR DAILY BREAD . . .

From Thee we have our life and all that we possess,
Forgive us our pride and self-sufficiency,
Teach us to reverence the earth which Thou hast made fruitful,
Teach us our oneness with those by whose labour our food is produced and brought across sea and land,
Fill us with active pity for the millions who have not enough to eat, for the millions who suffer from the fear or reality of famine,
As Thou hast given to man the knowledge which can produce plenty, give also the wisdom to bring it within the reach of all.
Thou, Who hast made us men, so that we live not by bread alone but by Thy Word,
Feed us this day with the words of life.
Let all that is divine in Thy world, let the unsleeping power of Truth and Love, possess us and work through us.
Thou art Thyself our Life,
Live in us this day.

THE SACRAMENT OF AUTUMN

Not for our bread alone, O Father-Giver
Not only for the fields of ripening grain,
But for the countless riches of creation,
We offer thanks this season, once again.
For branches bowed with apples in the garden,
For berries hid beneath the prickly thorn,
For glowing hues of moorland gorse and heather,
The burnished bronze that bracken slopes adorn.
For fruitfulness of thicket and of hedgerow,
All out of springtime beauty Thou hast made
And shown declining year's symbolic glory
By fiery splendour of the wooded glade;
For youth sped on to age of life's declining,
For sunset glow foretelling unborn day,
For joy upraised above the blast of sorrow,
For life made new from what had seemed decay,
For myriad personal sins that are forgiven,
And peace that permeates each contrite soul,
The grace that helps to make a true amendment
And balm that makes the broken-hearted whole.
For these and all Thy many mercies
So richly poured upon us day by day
Our hearts go out to Thee in adoration,
And faintly breathe the thanks we cannot say,
—Source unknown

CHURCH GOING

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says—
“Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the habit of some is.” Clearly we see that even in that first century of the existence of the Christian Church, there were some who had formed the habit of merely occasional attendance. But notice also how the sacred author implies that we are to join in the assembly of the saints **both** for our own sakes **and** for the sake of our fellow Christians.

We are to stir up one another to love and service. For Christianity is in its very essence a corporate affair. You can't really be a Christian all by yourself. You cannot retire into your shell, or into your own corner and live the Christian life there. A single individual cannot be a Christian in his singleness.

He can be a Christian only in his togetherness with his fellows. It is when at least two or three are gathered together in His name that Christ promised to be there in their midst. A leading citizen of Chicago once said to the famous evangelist, D. L. Moody, who was visiting him in his own dressing room, “I do not see that I cannot be just as good a Christian outside the Church as within it.” Moody said nothing but stepped to the brightly burning fire and, picking up a blazing coal in the tongs, allowed it to burn by itself. In silence the two men watched it smoulder and go out. “I see” said the other, and next Sunday he went to Church.

St. Luke's Gospel tells of our Lord's own practice in this matter, “And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath Day . . .” We might have thought that custom had no place in our Lord's life, but here it is, “As His custom was”.

We might have thought He had no need to go to Church, yet in this also He identified Himself with His human brethren. He went to the synagogue every Sabbath day. This, of course, was the Jewish synagogue, for it was not until Pentecost that the Christians began to meet in a separate place of their own. But the word ‘synagogue’ simply means ‘place of worship’.

Surely, then, if our Lord Himself made straight paths for His feet, we are called upon to do the same. If He had His own rules for Himself, we should not be above having rules for ourselves. If He submitted Himself to a regular spiritual discipline, His followers should do no less. If He had His fixed customs, surely we should have ours. For in this too He has left us an example that we should follow in His steps. And still He goes to church with us every Sabbath Day and it is to meet Him that the rest of us go. Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the custom of some is, but let us follow His better custom: and let us make it our rule, with Coleridge's Ancient Mariner:

To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company.
To walk together to the kirk
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay,

THE INDIAN OCEAN

Diego Suarez

Farm Purchase

The bishop, the Rt. Revd. Gabriel Josoa, and his people face big problems: low standards in education and lack of opportunities for qualified people, an inert, nominally Muslim environment, and isolation from the rest of Madagascar for many months of the year, except by air.

One new enterprise is encouraging. The bishop has bought a farm at Tsiandrotonona, 50 miles south of Diego Suarez, and 2,500 feet up. It is a self-help scheme to provide financial support for the clergy and teachers. A by-product is hoped for—the appreciation by church workers of the dignity of labour and of the importance of the proper use of the soil. USPG has appointed an agriculturalist, Mr. Ralph Filkins (formerly in Malawi) to take charge of the farm. His Swiss wife will find her knowledge of the French language a great asset. Ralph writes, 'The farm is in two parcels: the lower one being 140 acres in extent and very fertile. The upper one of about 320 acres looks as if it has 250 acres of good ploughable land, gently undulating, the remainder being steep hills.' He has many ideas, but needs money to start work on the land.

THE BLURRY AGE

I shuffled down into the smoke-filled room where glistening bodies writhed to the wail of jumbled sounds. A bleary one dripped with sweat behind his drum; while the trumpeter weaved and the woman closed her eyes and shrieked of love.

I climbed the marble steps to the museum of art and viewed canvases of splashes, zig-zag, swirls and blobs. A twisted crescendo of drunken checkerboard towered over me and an ecstatic blob of emaciated people things glowered in the corner.

I paid a lady in a glass cage 50 pence to see on the screen scattered shreds of life, photographed out of focus and spliced together with masking tape.

I went to a conference on Relevance and I didn't know what anybody was talking about.

I attended a joint committee on Theology where they said theology isn't necessary.

I read a book on morals which said there are none.

I read a book on God which said there isn't any God.

Then—I turned to the Word of God and Read: "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are unseen are eternal."

ST. CUTHBERT'S GUILD

We are all looking forward very much to getting underway with the Autumn and Winter Programme. The committee have tried hard to find something to interest all ages and tastes. Here is the opportunity for the people of Halsall to meet together each month for fellowship and recreation and I look forward to meeting you all in the Schools on the Guild evenings.

PROGRAMME 1971—1972

MEETINGS COMMENCE AT 7.45 p.m. IN HALSALL C. OF E. SCHOOL

1971

Tuesday September 21st.

Opening Meeting, Guild Hot Pot
Supper and Dance, Tickets 75p

Tuesday October 12th.

Ainsdale Sand Dunes Nature
Reserve.
Illustrated talk by Mr. A. C.
Aldridge, Nature Conservancy
Warden.

Tuesday November 9th.

"Some experiences of a Clown".
Talk and demonstration by Mr.
A. Y. Pedlar.

Tuesday December 14th.

Family Christmas Party.
Carols by the choir and talk by
the Rector.

1972

Tuesday January 11th.

Holidays '72.
Illustrated talk by Armstrongs
Travel Agents, Crosby.

Tuesday February 8th.

Film Evening.
'Ring of Bright Water.'

Tuesday March 14th.

Home Decorating talk by Mr. H.
Sheepwash of Leyland Paints
Ltd.

Tuesday April 11th.

The Lever Collection, illustrated
talk by the Curator of Lady
Lever Art Gallery, Mr. R.
Fastnedge.

Tuesday May 9th.

Annual General Meeting.
Beetle Drive.

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

- Sept. 5 Mrs. R. Brett
12 Mrs. Blundell and Mrs. Park
19 Miss Mawdsley and Mrs. Parker
26 Mrs. Ord
Oct. 3 Harvest Festival the Congregation.

SERVERS' ROTA

- Sept. 5 9.00 a.m. Jim Heaton
12 10.30 a.m. Harold Grimshaw and Malcolm Serjeant.
19 8.00 a.m. John Gaskell.
6.30 p.m. David Stopforth.
26 8.00 a.m. Peter Balmer.
10.30 a.m. Raymond Juba & Michael Lewis.
Oct. 3 8.00 a.m. Brian Heaton.
10.30 a.m. Stephen Dutton.

SIDESMEN'S ROTA

- Sept. 5 E. Blackhurst, E. Orritt, H.S. C. Shacklady, W. White.
12 J. D. Grimshaw, R. Dutton, R.H. P. Attwood, H. Rimmer.
19 J. Cheetham, H. Dean, J.H. B. Heaton, J. Gaskell.
26 P. Ainsley, R. Gaskell, J.R. G. Porter, S. Park.
Oct. 3 H. Grimshaw, H. Manners, H.S. E. Grimshaw, D. Sephton.

HOLY BAPTISM

"Received into the family of Christ's Church"

- Aug. 8th Karen Nicola, daughter of Eric and Jean Mary Stopforth, of Holly Mount, 42 Station Road, Barton.

HOLY MATRIMONY

"Those who God hath joined together"

- July 31st Alexander Chandley of 5 Wortley Road, Fazakerley, Liverpool, and Elizabeth Anne Lyon of 2 Chestnut Close, Summerswood Lane, Halsall.
July 31st John Thomas Pound, of 162 Carr Moss Lane, Halsall, and Sarah Kenyon, 7 Linaker Drive, Halsall.

CHRISTIAN BURIAL

- "In sure and certain hope"
Aug. 4th Jane Sephton, Aged 81 years, of Haven of Rest, Peel Street, Southport.
Aug. 21st Alfred Blundell Gutteridge, Aged 48 years of 184 Oldfield Road Coventry.

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What's Yours

When the Athenaeum temporarily closes, members are given hospitality at another club. In these new surroundings a bishop asked for a "Crockford" (the clerical directory). After an interval the porter came back and said he was sorry there was no such drink at the bar.

Half a Doctor

The congregation of a small American church in the countryside considered their young pastor should have the letters D.D. after his name. This could be obtained for 50 dollars. But only 25 dollars could be raised. So a letter was written to the young pastor's college asking that one D might be given now for the 25 dollars herewith. The other D would be applied for later.

All for Free

A Bournemouth vicar recently had a new experience. After a service of Holy Baptism the mother of the child turned to him and said, "There is no fee is there, Vicar?" On his telling her there was not she turned to her husband and remarked, "I told you so. There's no fee. It's all on the National Health."

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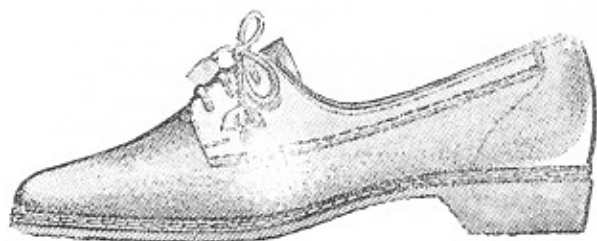
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