

## VICAR'S NOTES

**MRI:** I was glad to see that what I wrote about MRI last month was well backed-up by our inset, Outlook. None of us can now have an excuse for saying "MRI — I've no idea what it's all about!" Indeed we have some idea, but MRI is such a big thing that some idea is not enough — we have to get thoroughly involved in it. We here at St. James's are one of 50 pioneering parishes in the diocese who have the honour and responsibility of taking the lead in this field, and the Archdeacon of London, who acts for the Bishop as chairman of the diocesan steering-committee, writes to us: "As you know, the project is in the nature of a pilot scheme, and the development of MRI in the diocese will be influenced very greatly by the lessons we learn from the fifty parishes taking part this Lent." The four of us who went from here — along with the representatives from the other 49 parishes — to the introductory session in a church hall in Westminster, fully realised what a great thing this could be, if people will really give it a chance.

**Lent:** So our main thinking, praying and working this Lent will be centred around MRI and "No small change." Sermons on Sunday will be preached on themes connected with this. At the Parish Communion at 9.30 a.m. the subjects will be: Lent I — Now; Lent II — Prayer of Faith; Lent III — Light and Darkness; Lent IV — Loaves and Fishes; Lent V — The Living God. At Evensong at 6.30 p.m. sermons will be preached on some passages from the Acts of the Apostles which are of special relevance for to-day.

Our main "working-sessions" will be on Thursday evenings, from 8.0 — 9.30 p.m., at Wayside, on March 11, 18, 25, April 1, 8. If these are to be really worth-while, useful and enjoyable, they need to be supported in strength. Part of our Lenten determination should be to see that they are — "I'll be there, come what may" — and this determination should, of course, be extended to the Sunday services, and especially the Parish Communion. If some people are unavoidably prevented from coming to the series in Lent, there is no reason why the course should not be repeated later in the year — but let us be sure that what prevents us is really unavoidable!

"No small change" fits in very closely with the development and expression of Stewardship, and so it comes to us at a most appropriate moment, just after the completion of the first stage of the new programme which has been such a stimulating experience for us all. In this diocese, the officers responsible for guiding the parishes in this new field are those of the Council for Christian Stewardship, some of whom we have got to know well in recent weeks, and it is good to know that the link will now be strengthened through co-operation in MRI as well.

**Reform and Renewal:** I have heard of at least one church in the neighbourhood whose study-group is taking as a subject for discussion the notes of an address given by Desmond Fisher at the ecumenical gathering at St. Margaret's Hall, on January 22, in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Mr. Fisher is the editor of the Catholic Herald, and what he said was refreshing and moving in its candour and charity. He spoke as a convinced Roman Catholic, admitting the slowness of his

church in getting down to the task of reforming itself and not trying to excuse it, but also making clear to us non-Romans that this reform now at last taking place and bringing with it the hope of a great renewal raised important and challenging issues for our own churches.

Here are some of the things he said:

"The Roman Catholic Church is experiencing a deeper and more meaningful conversion to Jesus Christ, the Christ of the Gospel . . . . The point the other Christian Churches must face is this. Is there need for a live reform in yours? . . . . What Roman Catholics are looking to their fellow-Christians for now is a similar re-conversion to Jesus Christ, a similar new commitment to His service. Such a conversion can only bring us close together and make our witness more effective."

"Do not say that you do not need this conversion, though we do. The world has given us the answer, for the world is turning its back on us all. We need to reform. We all need to renew ourselves. The Christian Churches must unite if they are to be a more effective witness to Christ in the world. We are going through our reform now. It is painful and it will be a slow process. The question you must face, the question which Albert Outler (an American Methodist who was one of the Protestant observers at the last session of the Vatican Council), one of you, puts to you is this: Will you accept the need for reformation and renewal too, even if it is agony to your mind? Or will you reject it to the harm of your soul? The decision is yours."

**Thanks:** To Mr. and Mrs. J. Thompson, who, amongst their many other acts of kindness and help, year after year supply the church with a splendid, beautifully embellished and lighted Christmas-tree. And not only supply it, but spend a long time setting it in its place on Christmas Eve and removing it after Candlemas. This year the tree was better than ever and the brilliant new set of lights never once failed through all the hours they were in use.

### CALL TO PRAYER

On the first Friday in Lent every year, a call goes out to Christian women in at least 150 countries to make a renewed dedication of their lives to God in deep prayer. To help in this, an order of corporate worship is prepared by women from a different country each year—this year, members of the United Church in Pasadena, California.

The services sponsored by the Hampton Council of Churches, using this basic order, will on this occasion be held in All Saints' Church at 3.0 p.m. (speaker: Miss Smithers, lately on the staff of Trafalgar School) and 8.0 p.m. (speaker: Miss Hotchin, head mistress of Kneller Girls' School). C.H.B.

### STEWARSHIP DINNER

It was heartening to see that such a great proportion of those invited to the dinner took the opportunity afforded to come and listen to the plans for the future of their parish and the ever-increasing part they—as part of the body of the Church—are to be asked to play in that future.

It was Mr. Melville's task as General Chairman to welcome the guests. He said that since the start of St. James's first scheme the entire concept of Stewardship had altered and broadened to include the stewardship of the whole of life; spiritual benefits are to be the main objective, not just a bye-product of material well-being.

The principles of the Programme on which St. James's is embarked were explained by Mr. Jackson. The first and most vital is that **we are the Lord's stewards** — we come from God, we go to God and all we have is God's. We hold everything in trust from God; our time, our talents and our money — even Life itself. "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we carry nothing out." It follows that it **matters** to the Lord how we use His gifts. We have been given free will, we can do as we wish. We can ignore our Lord and leave Him out of our lives or we can respond to His love and find peace of mind in living a worthwhile life in Christian fellowship and service.

Part of our necessary giving involves money and Mr. Brooks gave an able account of the P.C.C.'s stewardship of money entrusted to it over the past three years. Materially, the church has been put in order, and there is still work to be done in this connection — further decoration, a new lighting system, necessary repairs to organ and boiler, etc., but the new Programme is not based on giving solely against the needs involved in the church's upkeep and maintenance although it would be foolish to ignore that the need exists. Time, talents as well as money are needed so that God's work may be done in the parish and the world at large.

Mr. Gostling spoke of the personal application of Christian Stewardship. We all speak of ourselves as Christians, we all attend church — more or less regularly, but have we ever sat down and really thought out what our beliefs mean to us in terms of material values and effort? We should look at our giving, not in terms of an amount, but in terms of what it means to us. It is fair to say that our attitude towards giving, whether it be of time, talents or money, is a pretty sure indication of the relative importance we attach to our faith.

No one is going to tell us what we are expected to give, no one will announce what anyone else has given, there is no published target. The decision on how and what to give will be up to every individual, and if the thinking is right, the gift will be something of which we will be neither proud nor ashamed. A fuller surrender of all that we are and have to God's will and His work will bring in fuller measure that "Peace which passeth all understanding."

Mr. Robinson's task, as Secretary of the Stewardship Committee, was to emphasise that the Stewardship of Time and Talents is perhaps the most important aspect of the Programme, and if properly handled, certainly the most rewarding and exciting. The Church really getting down to the job of **being** an effective Church here in this parish. Unlike the stewardship of money this phase cannot be gone into in just a few weeks and an organisation to deal with the aspect will be set up within a month or so. "If Christian Stewardship is taught merely as a means of raising money for the church it will fail. If it is taught with single-minded emphasis upon the accountability of the faithful steward to

God, for the right using of all with which God has entrusted him, the needs of the Church will look after themselves."

Mr. Robinson called for a kindly and understanding reception of the male visitors. We only had to look back over the last three years to see how the particular needs which faced the parish when last a body of men went out to seek assistance had been met. We must not now be complacent and think we had finished something; on the contrary we were on the threshold of a new concept of Christian Stewardship. The Church is not a thing apart, it is what we choose to make it — a "closed shop" for a comfortable few or a power working for our Lord for the good of the whole community.

**To Think Over:** "Jesus calls us o'er the tumult of our life's wild restless sea . . . saying Christian follow me." How many of us hear the call, and, hearing, how many of us answer.

There is a call now in this Parish — a call to be stewards of all that the Lord has given us. Shall we bury His gifts in the cares and bustles of this world or shall we make them gain interest? God has given us "to ourselves" so that we in turn can give ourselves for others. The Church, God, is calling now — to each one of us in this parish of St. James's. Let us answer and make our Church and our Belief felt in Hampton Hill by the way in which we answer the call. M.O.

### HISTORY SOCIETY — BOOK LAUNCHING

"The Birth and Growth of Hampton Hill" will be "launched" by an all-day sale at Wayside, St. James's Road, from 10 a.m. until 8 p.m. on March 20. Refreshments will be served through the day free of charge.

There is already a long application list and only 750 copies are being printed, so if you want to secure a copy be sure you attend the launching sale. It would greatly help the Society's limited resources if everyone who has reserved a copy would do their best to collect it at Wayside on the 20th. If this is impossible copies will be delivered in the immediate vicinity, free of charge.

The book will cost 12/6, or 13/6 if it has to be sent through the post. It would greatly help the organisers if you bring the right money with you.

From Monday, 22 March, Spinks (18, High Street) and Westons (197, High Street) will handle a limited number of sales on a non-profit making basis. Mr. Rump, at the Post Office, has kindly agreed to take orders for the book. We are grateful for this co-operation.

Get YOUR copy quickly. The printers can only hold the frames for a further edition for a short while. After that, the costs of a second edition will rise.

M.O.

### OUR PARISH MAGAZINE

We are pleased to report that Mrs. Pat Young has kindly taken over the main distribution of the magazines from Mrs. Melville, and we take this opportunity of thanking Mrs. Young, and thanking Dilys Melville for having carried out this work for so long despite that fact that, at times, it has been very difficult for her to do so. Mrs. Young's address is 90, Ormond Avenue, Hampton — Tel. No. Molesey 5629 and it will greatly ease the work if distributors will kindly keep her advised

of any changes, and if, when they are likely to be away when the magazine is due out, they will arrange for a deputy to do their "round," informing Mrs. Young of the name and address of the person who will be doing it in their stead. It was really splendid to have people come forward to offer to help deliver the magazines, in response to the appeal — thanks to one and all (including the "regulars") for their kind cooperation.

TO ADVERTISERS: At this time of going to press it is possible that there may be one or two spaces to let for the next year which commences with the May magazine. If you contact Mrs. Mills (Molesey 6626) as quickly as possible this valuable advertising space may still be available.

D.W.

### AROUND THE SPIRE

We wish to express our appreciation of Ann Stuart agreeing to carry out the worthwhile task of distributing the Quarterly Notes of the Bible Reading Fellowship.

Ann is a member of the Y.P.F. and we also have news of Raymond Draper becoming the Y.P.F.'s representative on the Old People's Welfare Committee — he was given a great welcome at the last meeting of the Committee. Groups of these young people have already started their good deeds for the "older folk."

Whilst on the subject of the Old People's Welfare Committee — there is a desperate need for a secretary and if anyone reading this feels they could find the time, and is able to help this voluntary organisation in this way, contact should be made with Mrs. Warwick (Molesey 7004), who is at present Acting Hon. Secretary, temporarily.

Mrs. Wilcox has now come "nearer the Spire," having left Percy House to become a resident at Hampton Court House. This makes it easier for us to visit her, but no easier for her to visit us as she cannot manage getting on or off buses. She would like to attend Mothers' Union meetings and other functions, so help from car-owners would be greatly appreciated.

D.W.

### CHURCH MUSIC

Singers who would like to augment the choir for John Stainer's "The Crucifixion" which is in the course of preparation will be very welcome at the Friday choir practice at 8 p.m. in the Vestry. Extra help will be necessary if this work is to be sung during Lent as is planned.

R.J.C.D.

### SOME DATES TO NOTE

- Mar. 5.—Women's World Day of Prayer: Services in All Saints', Hampton, at 3.0 and 8.0 p.m.
- „ 7.—1st Sunday in Lent: Holy Communion at 8.0 a.m. and 12.10 pm.; Matins 8.40 a.m.; PARISH COMMUNION 9.30 a.m., followed by BREAKFAST at 10.40 a.m. (W); Service at Laurel Dene 5.15 p.m.; Evensong 6.30 p.m.; Young People's Fellowship 8.0 p.m. (W).
- SUNDAY SCHOOLS: Infants' 9.45 a.m. (W); Junior & Senior 11.0 a.m. (in church); Rectory 2.30 p.m. (in Rectory School).
- „ 8.—Hampton Council of Churches: Prayer & Discussion Group — "The Roman Catholic Viewpoint on Unity" (Methodist Church, Hampton).

- .. 10.—7.15 a.m. Holy Communion; 10.0 a.m. Editorial Board (52, Park Road).
- .. 11.—8.0 p.m. Lent Course "NO SMALL CHANGE" begins (W).
- .. 14.—2nd Sunday in Lent: Services and other arrangements as last Sunday, except that there will be **no** late celebration of Holy Communion at 12.10 p.m. or service at Laurel Dene.
- .. 16.—8.0 p.m. Young Wives' Group: Mrs. Stevens — "Books and Reading" (W).
- .. 17.—7.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
- .. 18.—8.0 p.m. "NO SMALL CHANGE" (W).
- .. 20.—From 10.0 a.m. until 8.0 p.m.: launching of book "THE BIRTH AND GROWTH OF HAMPTON HILL," selling at 12/6 (W).
- .. 21.—3rd Sunday in Lent: Services and other arrangements as last Sunday, with the addition of service conducted by Y.P.F. at Laurel Dene 5.15 p.m.
- .. 24.—7.15 a.m. Holy Communion; 2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union: Mrs. Ecob — "Mothering Sunday" (W); 8.0 p.m. Church Council (W).
- .. 25.—The Annunciation: 10.0 a.m. Holy Communion: 8.0 p.m. "NO SMALL CHANGE" (W).
- .. 28.—4th Sunday in Lent: Holy Communion 8.0 a.m.; PARISH COMMUNION 9.30 a.m., followed by BREAKFAST 10.40 a.m. (W); Mothering Sunday Family and Parade Service 11.0 a.m.; Rectory Sunday School 2.30 p.m.; Holy Baptism 4.0 p.m.; Evensong 6.30 p.m.; Young People's Fellowship 8.0 p.m.
- .. 29.—8.0 p.m. Hampton Council of Churches: Public Meeting about Christian Aid. Film "The Harvest of the Future" (St. Mary's Hall, Hampton).
- .. 31.—7.15 a.m. Holy Communion; 8.0 p.m. Young Wives' Group—Discussion Evening (W).

- Apr. 1.—8.0 p.m. "NO SMALL CHANGE" (W).
- .. 4.—5th Sunday in Lent (Passion Sunday); Services and other arrangements as on March 7 (except **no** service at Laurel Dene) with the possible addition of Stainer's "The Crucifixion" after Evensong.
  - .. 7.—7.15 a.m. Holy Communion; 2.30 p.m. Mother's Union, Mrs. Scott Joynt — "Joy for Living" (W), 8.0 p.m. ANNUAL VESTRY & PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING (Hall).
  - .. 8.—8.0 p.m. "NO SMALL CHANGE" (W).

### BAPTISMS

- Jan. 24.—Maria Helen Bullock, 22, Hanworth Road.

### BURIALS & CREMATIONS

- Jan. 25.—Alfred William Tarrant, 31, Anlaby Road, Teddington, aged 75 years (at S.W. Middlesex Crematorium).
- .. 26.—Helena Gertrude Saunders, 102, Uxbridge Road, aged 81 years (at S.W. Middlesex Crematorium).
- Feb. 4.—Selina Minton, 30, Windmill Road, aged 84 years (at Twickenham Cemetery).
- .. 5.—Florence Louise Bigg, 87, Park Road, aged 80 years.