

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Women of Latin America have drawn up the service for this year's World Day of Prayer. Some of the people who have seen the draft of this service have thought that it was too political to be used in our churches. It seems to me that if we are concerned with world peace - and this, after all, is the aim and object of keeping this day - we might use this service to try to understand a bit how it feels to be a woman living in Latin America. The authors have sent some notes as background material for preparation for the service and as we are not making any arrangements to do special preparation this year, I thought it might be useful to publish some of their notes here:

"Latin America is a land of contrasts: rich in natural resources, precious stones and beautiful landscapes, but behind these settings are found countries impoverished by the presence of structures and ways of life which keep two-thirds of the 200 million inhabitants in a permanent state of misery, injustice and backwardness. For these 120 million persons, hunger, sickness and illiteracy are conditions of daily life. Without basic changes in the structure of society, the sufferings will only increase, for the population of Latin America doubles every twenty or thirty years, and it is calculated that there will be 600 million at the beginning of next century.

"This situation is not new for Latin America, which for years was exploited by Spain and Portugal. At the beginning of this century England became the dominant power, and after the first world-war Latin America became dependent on the United States as the new economic power, stepping up still more the deterioration of these countries.

"While need and dependency on other countries is not new for Latin America, what is new, for at least part of the population, is the growing awareness of its insufficiency, its dependence, and of the constantly growing political repression of the persons, groups and institutions which still struggle for a more just tomorrow for the many millions who live in sub-human conditions. Faced with this situation, the churches move in different directions, although there can only be two alternatives - either for or against the poor and those who suffer. It is not possible to be neutral. Thus one church, thinking of its task, expressed itself as follows :

'The God we know is a liberating God, a God who intervenes in history to break the structures of injustice and misery. He is the God who liberates the slave (Exodus), who overturns empires and raises up the oppressed (Luke 1 : 52). This is the message of liberation of the Gospel: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me: for he has sent me to heal the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captive and sight to the blind; to put at liberty those who are oppressed; to preach the new day of the Lord" (Luke (Luke 4 : 18-19). It is to this message that we are committed if we do not want to be found unworthy of our mission and our name'.

"Our educational task as Christians cannot ignore what is happening in the world today. Education is not simply academic instruction. Everything we know must be used as an instrument to make life more human in the place

where we live. Those who have participated in the preparation of this programme have understood their responsibility as Christian women. They have a concern in the light of the word of God and in the face of the events in their countries that makes them ask 'What does it mean to live as those obedient to our Lord in the world today?'

The date: FRIDAY, March 5.

Place: All Saints' Church, The Avenue, Hampton.

Times: 2.30 p.m. and 8.00 p.m.

C.H.B.

A PERSONAL VIEW OF THE HOLY LAND - 3

During any pilgrimage or holiday there occur incidents and experiences which are recalled with pleasure by people after their return. To the person who is involved these experiences may be few in number yet very varied. The great value of these experiences is that they are the means of recalling other experiences which a person has forgotten. These forgotten experiences may be no less important than those remembered. Yet these have remained of greater personal significance for many reasons.

To recall experiences of a visit to the Holy Land has a spiritual value for any person. Of this statement I am convinced as I write these words. For a pilgrimage to the Holy Land is a strenuous undertaking for any person in the best of health. A pilgrim has to use the time which is available to the best advantage by careful planning to visit the places of the Old and New Testaments. Even at the coolest periods of the year travel in Israel is very tiring under the hot sun. These two factors alone of limited time and tiresome heat can easily lead the most enthusiastic pilgrim to underestimate the spiritual significance and value of the holy places which are visited. I personally identify with this statement! At a time such as this the unexpected event restores to a tired pilgrim a sense of God and a personal relationship to Him.

The experiences of which I shall relate are, for me, deeply personal. These experiences, when they occurred a little over two months ago, gave to me a happiness which I am sure will be of lasting value in the future. In addition, there was a considerable degree of unexpected pleasure in these incidents which the most elaborate of tourist planning and expertise could not arrange. In a sense Inter-Church Travel provides the best type of new house into which the pilgrim puts the most valuable of personal furnishings!

In writing of these experiences I am aware that mere words and their use cannot be a substitute for human reaction. For example, other pilgrims have had, do and will have different views of the holy places which are as varied as people's opinions. Yet I invite you to share with me my most treasured memories of the Holy Land. These are seven in number. I shall describe these experiences in an ascending order to emphasise the impact which these events gave to me.

The first event which I recall with great pleasure occurred during my second visit to Bethlehem. After I had visited the Church of the Nativity I walked into Manger Square and into a side street which leads to the Milk

Grotto. This is the place where according to tradition the Blessed Virgin stayed with the Divine Child before their flight into Egypt. In this Grotto there is a cave which is believed to have been another temporary home of Our Lord. The present building which surrounds the Grotto was very beautiful, but did not inspire me to further appreciation. I left and began my return to Manger Square when I was invited by a Coptic Orthodox priest to visit his church. This was a complete surprise as I had never before visited a Coptic church let alone spoken to a Coptic priest. This gentleman, who spoke very good English and was interested in London, led me down some steps into his very dark church with its strange furnishings. One of these indicated yet another cave where the Blessed Virgin had brought Our Lord prior to their flight into Egypt. Happily, the priest stated that this cave is not a rival to the cave which I had just visited!

After a short conversation the priest allowed me to photograph him inside his candle-lit church. I did not need to look into the viewfinder of my camera to realise how beautiful this scene appeared. Suddenly there seemed to be a great peace in this old building which had been hallowed by many years of Egyptian devotion. That fact was the whole point! Here are Egyptian Christians worshipping in the town from which Our Lord and His Mother fled into Egypt!

In one way my second experience was a link with my encounter with the Coptic priest at Bethlehem. This second experience occurred at Nazareth, the character of which disappointed me. The town is in a valley with very steep sides up which I climbed in one direction. At the top is situated the Salesian Church and College which resembles an English boarding school. From this complex of buildings there is a splendid view of Nazareth. I tried several doors to the church. All were locked!

With disappointment I began my descent to the centre of the town. Suddenly I heard a voice which spoke English and enquired if I wished to visit the church. I was greeted by a young French layman who spoke enough English to communicate with me. He invited me to photograph the inside of the church which recalled memories of France. Briefly he described the function of the college. These include the education of young male Arabs and their training in various trades which will provide a living for these people. Here I had found an example of Christianity in practice. Here Our Lord's spirit of service to others was being energetically pursued. Here in this rather fearful-looking building Our Lord's identification with carpentry had not been forgotten and His Peace was in plentiful supply!

David Dore

(Owing to the pressure of space, the final part of this concluding instalment has had to be held over until next month. Ed.)

CHRISTMASTIDE 1975

The matter for the January issue of this magazine went to the printer a week before Christmas, so that it was not possible to say anything about our celebrations in retrospect. We can now say that they were indeed joyous, and enjoyed by a larger number of people than usual, though the total number of Christmas communicants was exactly the same as in 1974 - 228. But the Christmastide offerings for Christian Aid were £30 more than the year before - just over £100, which is very encouraging.

The church itself was beautifully decorated. The Christmas tree supplied unflinching year by year by Mr. and Mrs. Thompson shone forth resplendent in its gaiety and beauty; the Christmas crib, with its shepherds and then its kings, attracted much attention, as did also the magnificent figures made by the children of Clarendon School which were carried in procession at our Epiphany Welcome Service. The kings also took a prominent place, though this time unseen, in the dramatic reading of Dorothy Sayers' play about their coming to Judaea. The Christingle Service, which illustrates in striking fashion through the symbolism of candles and oranges that Christ is the Light of the World, brought many whole families with children of all ages and sizes, who entered deeply into its meaning. Candles were indeed used to bring added beauty to many services this year, and several services were held with the minimum use of electricity, not only the well-attended 'Carols by Candlelight' on the afternoon of Christmas Day. Instead of the dangerous procedures of former years Seymour Harris devised an ingenious arrangement which enabled clusters of eight small candles to shine forth in splendour but in perfect safety - and the church was transformed in to fairyland.

Through the help of many willing people, we were once again able to deliver a Christmas card to every home in the parish, and it may be that some of the newcomers whom we were glad to welcome may not have known of some of our celebrations apart from this.

The only jarring notes have been the thefts and then the break-in, which caused a considerable amount of damage and disarray. We know that a number of residents in the neighbourhood have suffered recently in a similar way, and we offer them our sympathy.

A JOY TO WATCH

As a member of the audience at the combined Hampton and Hampton Hill Old People's Welfare Committee party, held in St. James's Hall, on Saturday, January 3, I would like to add a word of appreciation for the St. James's contingent in their whole-hearted entertainment which followed the ample and most enjoyable tea.

The exercises à la Eileen Fowler were beautifully done, and the singing of the Monday afternoon choir was splendid and was enjoyed by everyone. Then I settled down with much pleasure to a performance of the pantomime, the Sleeping Beauty, conducted by Mrs. Pat Young, which had enchanted us all at the Harvest Supper. Never can I see this extravaganza often enough: Pat, the inimitable, unrivalled, unique producer, with her embarrassments, her asides, her cajoling of the actors; the two fairies, one good, one bad, with their tiny wands Vera and Dorothy live forever in those parts! the erratic blessing and cursing of the infant princess who seemed to waft through the air with the greatest of speed; the prince at last, put-off to a certain extent by Sleeping Beauty's beard which wouldn't come off; the finale when all the cast drank the health of the happy couple in Uncle's sleeping draught, and collapsed on the floor. I could watch all this again and again with much joy.

Thank you very much, Drama Group!

H.M.S.

THE MIGHTY SEA

The Annual Church Christmas Party held on January 10 at the Hall had the theme "The Mighty Sea". Many there were who craved to be mermaids but alas, the difficulties of that particular costume daunted even the most ingenious. Nevertheless the costumes were many and varied, a female 'buoy', several bathing belles - although perhaps beaux would be nearer the truth, a splendid Neptune and his consort and many pirates, fishermen, beachcombers and so on.

The members of the Social Committee were dressed as fishwives (females) matelots (males), and very splendid they were - not only in costume but also in the quality of the food they produced and in the games that were played. Fish-flan was the main ingredient of the refreshments - and very tasty it was - the tables themselves were decorated with cockle and mussel shells and looked very inviting.

The games were no less splendid - have you ever tried sitting on an empty cider bottle, feet outstretched and one on top of the other and then, without touching the floor, tried to light a candle? It looked impossible, but no one gave up and eventually a winning team emerged. All the games were excellent for their ingenuity and for their general application to young and not so young alike, and as half of the hundred or so people at the party were children, this was very important, as everyone was happy and occupied.

The decor also was particularly good this year - a lighthouse adorned the stage awash in foaming crumpled cellophane paper and a D.I.Y. revolving disco light flashed around the walls and ceiling. Nets covered more of the walls, seagulls flew in the air and fish darted about on the curtains. The hall was really transformed into "The Mighty Sea".

H.T.

(The Vicar took the opportunity of this well-attended social occasion to present the Church's 'half' of the portable television-set referred to elsewhere to Mr. Stanley Childs, as a token of the deep esteem in which he is held, and in appreciation of the sterling work he has done over so many years for hundreds of boys in our parish. - Ed.)

LENT STUDY GROUPS

During this coming Lent the Hampton and Sunbury Council of Churches are encouraging study-groups in various houses in the area, as was arranged during Lent in 1975.

Ash Wednesday is on March 3, and after that it is hoped that at least 10 groups will be held in the Hampton and Hampton Hill area. A number of these have been on-going throughout the year, meeting every two weeks, but during Lent they will meet weekly and will welcome newcomers who wish to join and observe the season of Lent in this way. Other groups will come into being for the period of Lent only. It is very much hoped that, as last year, the groups will be ecumenical and that there will be a good deal of mixing up.

We have agreed to study the Bible Reading Fellowship's leaflet "What is Man's Future?"; and copies of these notes will be available for everybody.

Lists of the various groups, where and when they are to be held, the names of hosts and the leaders, will be given out at all churches nearer the time. There will also be lists in the various churches for people to sign, again as last year.

H.M.S.

EXPLORING THE CHRISTIAN FAITH TOGETHER

As well as groups such as those mentioned in the previous article, there seems also to be a need for a group dealing with more basic issues and providing a kind of 'refresher-course' for those who were perhaps prepared for Confirmation at an early age and have never gone over the groundwork of the Christian Faith since then in a more adult and systematic way. There are also many adults who have not been confirmed and who have received little or no basic teaching about Christian doctrine and way of life. Brother Joseph and his team when they come - as they probably will in the autumn - will amongst other things doubtless do much to meet this need. But as there are a number of people who have made it clear to us that they are eager to go forward without delay, we are not waiting till then, but holding an informal meeting 'without strings attached' to discuss the whole matter and to see what is the next step, on Tuesday, February 24, at 8.00 p.m. in 69 St. James's Avenue. It would help us to know how many to expect if you would tell a member of the staff beforehand that you are interested.

RIDE! RIDE!

This is a new musical about the adventurous life of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, written by an Anglican. It has been shown in the north and received good reviews: the B.B.C. has said of it 'an amazing story, wittily and imaginatively told... had the kind of melodies that stick in your mind'.

It will be at the Westminster Theatre from May 21 to July 3, and will be directed by Peter Coe, of 'Oliver' fame. Special advance rates are available if seats are booked and paid for by February 28. Our local Methodist friends hope to arrange several coach-parties, which we would be very welcome to join, but we may well be able to fill at least one coach on our own.

As these details have just come in, it has not been possible to consult the Social Committee about this, but no doubt they will be kind enough to take action on this matter and organise a theatre-outing if they felt there would be sufficient support - so please let them know if you would like to go as soon as possible.

Reports have come in that, as well as being highly enjoyable, this play is also gripping and inspiring, and has had a quickening effect on the life of many local churches.

SCOUT GROUP NEWS

1976 is Cub Jubilee Year and to commemorate same a very attractive Badge is being issued to all connected with Cub Scouts. Also Twickerie in June should be very special this year.

12 Football Matches have been arranged, also a Parents' Open Evening on 25 February. On 14 January the Cub Scouts will be holding their New Year Party and on 30 January the Scout Troop held a Fancy Dress Party.

Congratulations to Michael Anthony on being the first Scout in our Troop to achieve the Chief Scout's Award, Michael has been with the Group very many years and we are sorry he is now leaving us.

M.J.C

On the Friday before Christmas, the Parish Hall was the scene of 'Carols around the Camp-fire', when Scouts and Cubs invited parents and friends to join them in the singing of many well-loved carols, and some not so familiar ones. Helen Taylor introduced a percussion group of Cubs and others whom she had trained, and who accompanied some delightful young songstresses in Cowboy and other carols which were quite new to most of the audience.

The highlight of the evening came when the recently retired Group Scout Leader, Stan Childs, was presented with a portable television set, purchased through donations from Cubs and Scouts, past and present, their parents, and members of St. James's Church. This had been a well-kept secret and Skip was completely at a loss for words and unable even to voice any objections when the Scouts chaired him round the camp-fire. Refreshments were served and old acquaintances renewed, to make a happy get-together for all.

M.S.

THE PARISH HALL

Items left in Church Property - There are, at the moment several coats of varying sizes and types left in the Parish Hall, also in the Church. We are reluctant to throw them out, but fear they will have to go to the next jumble sale if they are not claimed. Please contact Mrs. Severn - 979 1954 - if you wish to enquire about them.

THE LADIES' CHOIR

We are still at it! Singing I mean. Our ladies' choir is growing, and we are even asked to entertain people! Alternate Mondays in the Vestry is when

and where we meet and have a great deal of fun. Do come and join us if you would like some light-hearted singing. We do our best to get it right, and sometimes we succeed. Rehearsals will be February 9 and 23 and March 8 and 22 at 2.30 p.m.

E.V.S.

DEANERY INTERCESSION LIST

February	8	Holy Trinity, Twickenham
	15	St. Mary, Hampton
	22	The Bishop, Archdeacon and Rural Deans
	29	The Mayor and Corporation
March	7	The Hospitals which serve the Deanery
	14	Homes and Day Centres for old people

SOME DATES TO NOTE

February

- 8 Instead of Evensong, informal CANDLEMAS WELCOME SERVICE; followed by refreshments.
- 9 14.30 Ladies' Choir (Vestry)
- 10 20.00 Stewardship Sub-committee (106 Park Road); Prayer Meeting (75 Burton's Road)
- 11 07.30 Holy Communion; 20.00 Welcome Group (21 Longford Close); Deanery Synod.
- 12 20.00 Parochial Church Council (W)
- 16 10.30 Editorial Board (21 St. James's Road)
- 17 20.00 Tuesday Club: Miss Edwards speaks about Captain Cook (W)
- 18 07.30 Holy Communion; 20.00 Beetle Drive (W)
- 19 20.00 Prayer Meeting (69 St. James's Avenue)
- 23 14.30 Ladies' Choir (Vestry)
- 24 SAINT MATTHIAS: 07.30 Holy Communion; 20.00 Prayer Meeting (75 Burton's Road); Meeting to consider formation of Adult group (69 St. James's Avenue); Social Committee.
- 25 20.00 Possibility of P.C.C. Meeting (to be decided on February 12)
- 26 20.00 Wayside Project Training Session (W)

March

- 1 14.30 Mothers' Union Branch Meeting: Speaker - Mrs. Robson (W)
- 2 20.00 Tuesday Club : Mrs. Leah speaks on the Toy Library (W); Properties Committee (21 St. James's Road).
- 3 ASH WEDNESDAY: Holy Communion at 08.45 (St. Anne's Chapel, L.E.H.S.); 10.00 (Laurel Dene); 19.45 - Parish Communion in church.
- 4 20.00 Prayer Meeting and Lent Study Group (69 St. James's Avenue)
- 5 WORLD DAY OF PRAYER: 07.30 Holy Communion; United Services at All Saints', Hampton at 14.30 and 20.00
- 9 20.00 Stewardship Committee (106 Park Road); Prayer Meeting and Lent Study Group (75 Burton's Road)
- 10 & 12 Holy Communion at 07.30
- 14 Instead of Evensong, informal LENT WELCOME SERVICE at 16.30, followed by refreshments.
- 16 20.00 Tuesday Club: Mr. Day comes with a Guide Dog for the Blind (W)

BURIAL AND CREMATION

- December 23 May Theresa Clout, 13 Fitz Wygram Close, aged 86 years (at Teddington Cemetery)
- January 8 Nancy Swan, 32 Fordbridge Road, Ashford, aged 87 years (at Kingston Crematorium)