

**Badsey, Aldington and Wickhamford
Parish Review**

JUNE, 1956

"AS ONE THAT SERVETH"

(The Sermon preached by The Lord Bishop of Worcester at his Enthronement in Worcester Cathedral on Sat., Feb. 11th, 1956).

"Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands and that He was come from God and went to God, He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments and took a towel and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded. So after He had washed their feet and had taken His garments and was set down again, He said unto them: Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call Me Lord and Master; and ye say well for so I am. If I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet; ye ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

He stoops to conquer! God kneels before Man! The Creator bends low to serve His creation! Perhaps this was the most dramatic moment of history, for it shows the uniqueness of Christianity, the only faith in the world which dares to state that Deity, in revealing divinity, does so not in majesty and pomp, but in an act of service.

This was the logical result of the Incarnation. It was inevitable from the first moment of Christmas that God, Who in Christ had thus entered the realm of human life, should eventually wash the feet of man. For this was Divinity's destiny.

We stand today—you and I—on the eve of Quinquagesima Sunday, at that particular part of the Church's year when, on the threshold of Lent, we look back and also forward. We look back because memory still holds open the stable door at Bethlehem, and we can see with the mind's eye the Shepherds and the Magi, the Humble and the Wise, in adoration before Him Whose throne is the simple manger. But we also look forward, for in spirit we must go with the Man of Galilee to the wilderness of His temptations and with Him tread the road that leads to Jerusalem. For us as for Him there is always the Cross, and because of Him there is for us the blessed hope of a Resurrection and the dawning of an Easter day.

Look then if you will at the scene of my text. It was the Thursday before He died. "Supper being ended," and yet by a paradox that Supper has never ended, for it is and has always been the central act of the Church's worship; indeed, we sang in the procession at the beginning of this service of

"The ceaseless adoration
Of the Eucharistic praise."

Christ rises from the table and girds Himself with a towel. He empties Himself of His glory and assumes the role of a servant. You will recall how Peter remonstrates that he will never allow his feet to be washed, and how Christ tells him that unless in humility he accepts the Divine act of service, he can have no part or share in Christ's ministry. For this washing was a symbol and a sign that what Christ had done His followers were themselves to do. To bind up the broken-hearted. To proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. To comfort all that mourn. To give unto

them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. And he who would do all that must, like his Master, take a towel and gird himself. He must first strip himself of all self-seeking, all pride and arrogance, and be clothed with humility and love, and be consumed by a passion which desires to serve others but never himself.

And do notice, because it is so important, the sequence of the ceremonies on that first Maundy Thursday in the Upper Room. First there was the Sacrament given and received and then the washing of the feet. They are inseparable, for the latter is the expression of the former. Holy Communion is the means of grace by which we can alone make a Community into a Holy Community. Sacrament and Service are indissoluble, they are one and the same.

Now all that I have preached so far, I have preached first and foremost to myself. Today I have been enthroned as the 109th Bishop of this ancient and historic Diocese of Worcester. This service is the climax of that series of events which so subtly bind in fellowship Church and State in our country: the Call and the Acceptance; the Election by the Dean and Chapter; the Confirmation of the Election, followed by the Consecration and the Homage to Her Majesty the Queen. Finally, today's ceremony of Enthronement, and now, all that completed, I would remind myself, and indeed I would beg you, the people of my diocese, that you will constantly remind me as long as it shall please God to allow me to be with you, that "I am among you as one that serveth." My vocation is to be the Servant of the Servants of God. And most of all, when I am attired in the vestments of my sacred office, may I wear invisibly round my soul the towel wherewith my Master washed His disciples' feet and be thus myself clothed with His divine courtesy and humility. For

"Of courtesy, it is much less
Than courage of heart or holiness.
Yet in my walks it seems to me
That the grace of God is in courtesy."

Pray then for me, Brethren.

Now it seems to me after thirty years' experience as an ordinary parish priest that the strength and vitality of the Church lies, as in fact it has always done, in the parishes; for the parish is the unit where Christians together can best demonstrate their vocation to serve their fellow men and women.

Today the Church is indeed better organised for her work than ever before in its history. We have in the Church Assembly our own Church Parliament. We have numerous Conferences and Committees, indeed a cynic might even suggest that we are more planned against than planning. There is indeed all the paraphernalia for efficiency. But that in itself cannot make the Church an effective agent of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We can be so busy with organisations, so concerned with methods, that we forget to say our prayers. In our efforts to gain the world, we may lose our souls, forgetting that our task is not to gain the world but to transform and transfigure it. And this can never be achieved merely by Committees—they are only the means—but by converted, committed and dedicated Christians.

It is what goes on in our village churches, it is the worship and services of the parish church in town and country, which really matter. Let them once reflect the love of Christ, then conversions will follow. It is therefore individual men and women on their knees before the altar who are the agents and the builders of the Kingdom. So basically what counts most in the work and the witness of the Church is the quality of the Christianity displayed by the parish priest and his people. Neglect this foundation and the whole superstructure of Church organisation becomes a toppling menace. So while Conventions, Commissions, Committees, Congresses, Conclaves, Concourses, Clubs, Causes, all have their place

and part in our strategy, it is the parish priest and under him the parishioners to whom Christ hands the keys of the Kingdom.

In the final analysis, I am profoundly convinced, it is the parish priest upon whom must depend the spiritual vitality of the parish, and upon the spiritual vitality of the parish ultimately depends the success or failure of the whole life, work and witness of the Church. For the vocation of the priest is to be the Shepherd of the Sheep, the Father of the Family, the Servant of Christ the King, the Friend and Counsellor of the people, the Parson or Person of the Parish. But who is to care for him and his family? Who is to do for him what he must do for his people? I conceive it to be the first care and concern of a Bishop to be the Pastor of his Pastors.

I therefore propose with my wife to visit every clergy home in the Diocese as soon as I can. It may indeed, with my other duties, take time, but it will be my first priority. Because just as the Laity have a right to expect that their Clergy should visit and minister to them, so I believe the Clergy in their turn have a right to expect that their Bishop shall be to them a true Father in God. I shall not feel that I have even begun my work here as a Bishop until I have prayed with my brethren and their families in their own homes.

Since the death of the late well-beloved Bishop there has been a long vacancy, and during this time the work of the Diocese has been splendidly carried on by the Clergy and Laity, and in this connection I would particularly like to say a special word of thanks to the Assistant Bishop, the Archdeacons and the Dean. I want you all to continue in the good work, for I come to you as a Father in God, not as a Managing Director. I want you to feel that the work of the diocese is a team work, in which each one of you in your vocation and ministry has a real share, each one realising that he or she is needed and does count, and that any special contribution you are able to make is not only wanted, but appreciated. Let us above all things continue to be a Family.

Finally I welcome today the representatives of the Civic and Educational work of the County, the Members of Parliament, the Lord Lieutenant and Deputy Lieutenants, the Magistrates, the representatives of Her Majesty's Forces, the County Councillors, and those of the medical and legal profession, together with those in business, commerce, agriculture and industry work in Worcestershire. Let me say here and now that I believe your work is not only of the highest importance, but it is indeed God's work, for just as Christ became one of us, so as I have already tried to indicate every human task, be it great or small, can also be seen to be a sacrament of the Divine initiative.

I look forward with eagerness to the privilege of being able to co-operate with you in every way open to me, in the care of the people of this great county, whose cure and well-being is both your concern and mine.

And may I also commend myself to the prayers of my Free Church friends. As the son of a Nonconformist, and proud of it, I would be your Bishop too, as far as traditions allow. Let us all work together for the unity and harmony of the Church, for in Christ we are one.

From the eternal habitations of the Blessed, one hundred and eight Bishops of Worcester look down on us. Today their prayers and hopes are mingled with ours. Let us therefore with them look to Jesus, the author and perfecter of their faith and ours; to Jesus kneeling on the floor of that upper room, by the supper table, washing the feet of His disciples.

"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

The only tool then of a Bishop's trade, and of yours, is a towel.

(St. Martin's Review).

BADSEY AND ALDINGTON NOTES CHURCH SERVICES

Sundays June 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, July 1st.—Services as usual.

THE CHURCH FETE

The Fête will be held in the Vicarage Garden on Saturday, June 30th from 3 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. Mrs. A. C. Sears has kindly consented to perform the Opening Ceremony. Programmes are now on sale. Members of the Mothers' Union, the Sanctuary Guild and Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Stewart are again responsible for the various Stalls, the 2nd Sunday Group of the Sanctuary Guild being in charge of the Tea Room. Mr. P. S. Tucker is organising a Bottle Stall and will be grateful for contributions to be sent to him (Field Cottage, Mill Lane) or to the Vicarage. Gifts for the other Stalls and for the Tea Room (Mrs. Harvey) will also be welcomed.

There will be the usual Sideshows, including Ladies' and Gents' Bowling, Pony and Donkey Rides, Treasure Hunt, "Roll-a-Car," "Dropping the Coin," "Post Office," etc. Mrs. Brady has promised to be responsible for the Apron Competition (Machine-made and Hand-made). Entries should be sent to her not later than Monday, June 25th.

Recipes for the Cake Competition can be obtained from Mrs. Chapman. Entries should be brought to the Vicarage not later than 10 a.m. on the day of the Fête.

If wet, the Fête will be held in the Village Hall (if unavailable, in Badsey School).

A Meeting of all helpers will be held in the Parish Room on Tuesday June 19th at 7.30 p.m. (i.e. prior to the Meeting of the P.C.C.).

Mothers' Union. The Joint Service on April 25th was a very happy and successful occasion. About 90 Members were present at the Service when the Rector of Willersey preached an eloquent and helpful sermon. Following the Service, an excellent Tea was provided by our Members in the Badsey Friends' Meeting House. We are indeed grateful to the Members of the latter for their willing co-operation and kindly help.

Annual Outing to Weston-super-Mare on Thursday, June 21st. Coach leaves 'The Pike' at 8 a.m., and will pick up at The Wheatheaf Inn and the Sandys Arms. Fares (10s.) to be paid not later than Tuesday June 5th.

Members are reminded that there are four "departments" of the Mothers' Union Stall at the Church Fête, viz., Fancy and Household, Pound, Handkerchief and Toilet Requisites, Mystery Parcels. Gifts for all these are invited.

It is also hoped that there will be many entries from Members for the Cake and Apron Competitions.

The date of the Annual Cleaning of the Church will be announced later.

The Choir. The news of the death of Mr. W. D. Sparrow was received with deep regret. His wonderful record of nearly seventy years as a Chorister and his work as a Bellringer will always be remembered. The motive of his ever-willing service was a deep love for the Church. A beautifully reverent Burial Service was a fitting tribute from the Choir and Congregation to one who by the sincerity of his Christian profession was held in the highest esteem by us all. Our deepest sympathy is extended to Mrs. Sparrow and the members of his family.

Guild of Ringers. As a tribute to the late Mr. W. D. Sparrow, a muffled peal was rung on April 24th by

Messrs. G. A. King, A. J. Taylor, A. Reed, E. Mitchell, T. W. Hardiman, A. Worthington, H. Wheatley, C. Longmore, R. Hall and A. J. Brazier (jun.).

The Quarterly Meeting of the South Worcestershire Change Ringing Association was held at Badsey on May 12th. An account of it will be included in next month's issue.

P.C.C. Next Meeting, Tuesday June 19th, in the Parish Room at 8 p.m.

Sunday School. Mr. David Rouse has left us to do his National Service and we shall miss him very much. He has been a Teacher for the past five years and has rendered valuable and efficient service. With the continued growth in numbers we need at least two new Teachers. Some of the classes are now over-large but lack of accommodation makes the further division of classes impossible at the moment. I do not think it is always realised how difficult conditions are for our faithful Teachers. Were it not for the large class held in the Parish Room we should have been unable to accept any more juniors during the past few months. Please remember Teachers and Scholars in your prayers.

W.B.C.

WAR MEMORIAL

The following are kindly responsible for the Flowers:— June 3rd, Mr. J. Holding; June 10th, Mrs. J. Major; June 17th, Mrs. Edwards; June 24th, Mrs. W. H. Reed; July 1st, Mrs. Betteridge.

SERVERS AND CRUCIFERS ON DUTY

	Server	Crucifer
Sunday June 3rd.		
8 a.m.	D. Barrand	_____
11 a.m.	R. Salter	R. Harvey
6.45 p.m.	B. Caswell	H. Wheatley
Sunday June 10th.		
8 a.m.	R. Hall	_____
11 a.m.	R. Harvey	H. Wheatley
6.45 p.m.	E. Harker	A. Sears
Sunday June 17th.		
8 a.m.	B. Caswell	_____
6.45 p.m.	A. Sears	R. Hall
Sunday June 24th		
8 a.m.	R. Harvey	_____
11 a.m.	E. Harker	R. Hall
6.45 p.m.	H. Wheatley	B. Caswell
Sunday July 1st		
8 a.m.	A. Sears	_____
11 a.m.	E. Salter	R. Harvey
6.45 p.m.	R. Hall	E. Harker

COLLECTIONS FOR CHURCH EXPENSES

April 15th, £7 19s. 3d.; April 22nd, £7 7s. 0d.; April 29th, £7 10s. 3d.; May 6th, £7 19s. 0d.; May 13th, £8 6s. 8d. **Total £39 2s. 2d.**

PARISH REGISTERS

Marriages

May 5th. Ronald Woodcock, Offenham, and Brenda Tomkins, Badsey.

Burials

April 24th. William Douglas Sparrow, aged 77 years.

WICKHAMFORD NOTES

Church Services

Sunday June 3rd. No 9 a.m. Service. 5.30 p.m. Evensong (in The Parish Room).

Sundays June 10th, 17th. Services as usual.

Sunday June 24th (St. John Baptist). Patronal Festival and Gift Day. 9 a.m. Holy Communion; 5.30 p.m. Evensong.

Sunday July 1st. No 9 a.m. Celebration; 5.30 p.m. Evensong.

In view of the fact that the work of spraying the Roof Timbers will be in progress at the beginning of June, the Church will be closed on Sunday June 3rd and there will be no 9 a.m. Celebration. Evensong will be held in the Parish Room at 5.30 p.m. It is hoped that the Church will be available for use on the following Sunday.

It is anticipated that the repair of the Sandys Monument will follow the spraying of the Roof, but this should not interfere with the Services.

As announced, the cost of spraying the Roof Timbers will be £172. This amount will have to be paid on the completion of the work and, therefore, the members of the P.C.C. have decided that the only course is to bring forward the date of Gift Day. It will be held on Sunday June 24th (St. John Baptist) instead of on the occasion of the Harvest Thanksgiving. Since St. John Baptist is our Patron Saint, the date chosen is most appropriate. Copies of a circular letter will shortly be distributed throughout the parish and it is earnestly hoped that there will be a generous response to this most urgent appeal.

Mothers' Union. Members are invited to join with the members of the Badsey Branch in the Outing to Weston-super-Mare on Thursday June 21st (see Badsey M.U. Notes).

Sunday School. The balance of £1 13s. 0d. which remained in the Men's Fellowship Fund has been handed over by Mr. Sturt to the Sunday School Fund—a very welcome gift!

Collections for Church Expenses (April 15th to May 13th incl.) £11 10s. 1d.

P.C.C. Next Meeting, Wed. July 4th at 8 p.m. in the Parish Room.

REPORTS OF VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

British Legion (Women's Section). Mrs. A. Syril presided at the April Meeting when there was a record attendance. Mrs. A. C. Sears kindly judged the Competition for a decorated colander—a difficult task since entries ranged from hats to flower baskets! The winners were Mrs. Savory (1), Mrs. Moran (2) and Mrs. Hunt (3). A consolation prize, given by the judge, was awarded to Mrs. Pedrick. The Women's Institute Drama Group presented two sketches which were enjoyed by all and Mrs. I. Knight expressed our thanks. Refreshments were served by Mrs. Brotherton and helpers. Mrs. J. Harwood was the winner of the Monthly Competition.

Badsey W.I. The May Meeting was presided over by Mrs. A. Reed, in the absence of Mrs. Carter. Mrs. Shelley was appointed Sick Visitor, and Mrs. Chapman reported on the Music Festival. Mrs. Mayne, V.C.O., explained the Resolutions for the A.G.M. and she was thanked by Mrs. Taylor. After Refreshments served by Mrs. A. W. Sparrow and helpers, Miss Anne Marlow gave a Demonstration of Party Sweets made from Wall's Ice-Cream, and she delighted everyone with the tempting results, which later proved to be as delicious as they looked. She was thanked by Mrs. Ingram. The Monthly Parcel was won by Mrs. Mitchell, who returned it for further competition, when it was won by Mrs. Pedrick.