

007066C 1958

THE VICAR'S LETTER

My Dear People,

The full report of the Lambeth Conference and its Committees (7/6) came out before the end of August, and I was able to read it as a holiday task, though I cannot say I have yet inwardly digested it! There is plenty of material in it for sermons, instructions and parochial study groups for many months to come. A popular edition "Lambeth and You", is to be published at the end of September. The shop price will be 1/6, but as there is a discount on large orders, we can sell them at the church at 1/2 each. This is dependent on many of you buying copies, so please have one when they come. The Bishops' short Message which they issued with the Encyclical is to be read in all churches in our Diocese on Sunday, October 19th.

The first monthly intercession list for our parochial prayer guild, about which I wrote last month, will be ready at the beginning of October, and I shall be glad to enrol members at any time now (annual subscription 1/-).

Any birthdays this month? Don't forget that Birthday Halfcrown for your Church, in thanksgiving for the gift of life.

Confirmation. As stated last month, preparation classes will begin towards the end of Oct. for the Confirmation on 15th April 1959. Candidates will be notified of the days and times of the classes. There will be a separate class for adults. It is important that I should receive the names of intending candidates not later than 19th Oct. As previously, no-one will be presented for Confirmation who has not been attending church regularly for the six months before the Confirmation.

Our Bishop wrote a very thought-provoking article on the subject of Confirmation in a recent number of the monthly review "Theology". I quote here a few extracts, wishing there was room for more. I will gladly lend my copy to anyone who would like to read the whole article.

"It is said that 60 per cent of the children baptised in this country are baptised in the Church of England, that 25 per cent are confirmed, and of that 25 per cent only 1 per cent remain as regular communicants. How much longer are we to tolerate this quite disgraceful situation? And by 'we' I mean all of us who are members of the Church—bishops, clergy and laity; we all are, or should be, greatly concerned, for if confirmation means anything, it most certainly means more than just having children 'done', as the saying is.

"In the brief two years I have been a bishop I have found my heart torn in two at every confirmation I have taken. Before me, kneeling to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (and what an awe-inspiring thing it is to be the unworthy channel of that gift), are children, children who have been carefully prepared by their parish priests; children who are endowed with youth's sincerity and simplicity; and

yet pressing upon me all the time, even as I place my hands upon their heads, is the knowledge that many of them will quickly lapse. I know this is true because now that I am doing my second round of confirmations, I ask about those I confirmed the previous year—are they still faithful? Do they come to their communions? Thank God a proportion are continuing, and daily increasing in grace, but over and over again the story is the same: in spite of all they can do, the clergy tell me that many have lapsed, lapsed in less than a year. In my diocese since I have been bishop some 5,000 candidates have been confirmed, and yet the statistics show that the weekly number of communicants remains the same, or increases only a little."

The Bishop goes on to say the Prayer Book pre-supposes that the candidate knows the elements of the Faith; is a praying person; and has a clear knowledge of a Christian's duty. He stresses first of all the need of the encouragement and example which the parents of the candidate above all must give. He continues:

"I have stressed the influence of the home, but the Church background is nearly as important. If we begin to demand a higher standard of parental co-operation, then the parents have an equal right to demand that, once confirmed, their children become members of a local church where they will be welcomed and made to feel part of the family; used, appreciated and moreover steadily instructed in their Faith. I am myself as concerned about this as I am about confirmation. Even if there is little encouragement at home, many candidates need not have lapsed if the regular church members had shown even an elementary Christian care and love for them. How many parochial church councillors know, pray for, or visit the newly confirmed? Instead of giving them jobs to do, there is often a policy of keeping them out. I wish that the average parish was as interested in its profit and loss account of human souls as it is in discovering reasons why it should not pay its quota. I am beginning to wonder if, before I confirm any candidates from any parish, I should not demand a written promise from the P.C.C. that they will support the parish priest in every way in the care of the newly confirmed. After all, we shall have more hope of the parents taking the matter seriously if they find the parish is doing so as well.

"..... Finally, for myself, I feel most keenly that the administration of the sacrament of confirmation should be one of the most worthwhile duties of my episcopal office, but frankly I find it one of the most heart-breaking. I know the opportunity is there. I know too, and am consoled by the knowledge, that the grace of God can and does transcend all our human frailties and follies, and that there are indeed notable exceptions to all that I have said. But I am still convinced that if we are really in earnest about making England Christian, we should

straight away, dismissing all sentimentality and unrealistic optimism, try to create a situation where the grace of God is not so severely handicapped as it is today."

MERVYN WORCESTER.

Let us all take our Bishop's words to heart. I bid you all to pray for our candidates as they begin their preparation, and for grace in ourselves to help them in every way we can.

Your sincere friend and Vicar,

PETER BRABY.

BADSEY AND ALDINGTON NOTES

Church Services

OCTOBER

5th. **Trinity XVIII.** (British Summer Time ends). As usual for 1st Sunday. 11 a.m. Family Service.

8th, 15th, 22nd, Wednesdays. 10 a.m. Holy Communion.

12th. **Trinity XIX.** As usual for 2nd Sunday.

18th, Saturday. **St. Luke, Evangelist.** 7 a.m. H.C.

19th. **Trinity XX.** As usual for 3rd Sunday.

26th. **Trinity XXI.** Alfred, K. of the W. Saxons. (Education Sunday). As usual for 4th Sunday.

28th, Tuesday. **S.S. Simon & Jude, Apostles.** 10 a.m. H.C.

NOVEMBER

1st, Saturday. **All Saints' Day.** 6-30 & 10 a.m. H.C.

Weekday Evensong will in future be said at 6-30 p.m.

Servers at Holy Communion

In process of revision. Servers will be notified personally.

War Memorial Flower Rota

October 5th, Mrs. Dungworth; 12th, Mrs. P. H. Sparrow; 19th, Mrs. Bonehill; 26th, Mrs. Kate Cleaver; November 2nd, Mrs. A. Reed.

Collections.

August 24th, £8-1-8; 31st, £5-15-10; Sept. 7th, £9-6-4; 14th, £7-14-7.

Birthday Halfcrowns acknowledged: Jonathan Braby, (Sept. 5th).

Parish Registers

Burial

September 17th. Kate Sparrow, aged 80.

Mrs. Sparrow had a very sweet nature and was much beloved by all who knew her. She survived her husband the late Mr. W. D. Sparrow, choirman and bellringer, by two and a half years. As a devout communicant and M.U. member, it was a great deprivation to her not to be able to get to church these last few months. She died peacefully in her sleep on a Sunday morning, having had her wish the previous afternoon of reaching the church and spending a few minutes there and at her husband's grave. Peace be to their souls. Warmest sympathy to her family in their bereavement.

Your prayers are asked for the sick. Mrs. W. C. Hall was taken ill last month and her husband had to be removed to Avonside Hospital. At the time of writing he is seriously ill. Mrs. Powell is in Evesham General Hospital. Miss Edith Jones has undergone an operation and is progressing favourably. We give thanks for the return from hospital of Mr. T. W. Hardiman, Miss D. Enstone and Mr. G. W. Marshall. Miss A. E. Crisp has returned to her home after convalescence. Mr. Raymond Crane is still in hospital.

Harry Wheatley—server, choirman, ringer, Sunday School teacher, and good sportsman—has gone this term to Redlands College, Bristol, to train as a teacher. We shall miss him very much at St. James's Church (though we look forward to seeing him in vacations), but wish him every blessing in his calling, and happiness in this time of preparation for it. We welcome Brian Caswell as a Sunday Sch. teacher in Harry's place.

We acknowledge gratefully the anonymous gift of three vases for the church in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Velvick.

Annual Cleaning of Church. Volunteers will be welcome, as follows:—Men, Thursday, October 16th, 5-30 p.m. Ladies, Friday, October 17th, 10 a.m.

Jumble Sale. To be held on Friday, October 24th, in the Old School, at 6-30 p.m., to raise funds towards opening a club for older residents in the village. Jumble to be brought to the Parish Room, not later than 3 p.m. on October 24th.

Mother's Union. The programme for the month is as follows:—October 14th "Christian Homes". Speaker—Mrs. Jones of Bewdley. Oct. 28th "How our Prayer Book came into being". Mrs. Hills of Worcester. E.G.B.

Men's Fellowship. Our first meeting of the new session will be on Tuesday, October 14th, in the Parish Room at 7 p.m., when Councillor W. G. Beckley of Evesham will talk to us about his impressions on a recent visit to Germany. We hope for a good attendance at this renewal of our fellowship together. A welcome is extended to any new members who would like to join us. If you are already a member, why not bring a friend?

Women's Institute. At the September meeting an interesting millinery display was given by Mrs. Clifford, on behalf of Ward's of Cheltenham. She was warmly thanked by Mrs. E. Smith, and afterwards many members purchased hats. Mrs. Ingram and Mrs. Morton were the winners of the social half-hour competition, "Myself when young", and the winner of the monthly parcel was Mrs. Wheatley.

WICKHAMFORD NOTES

5th, Sunday. **Harvest Festival.** 9 a.m. Holy Communion (with hymns). 3 p.m. Children's Gift Service. 5-30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon. Gifts of fruit, flowers, vegetables, preserves etc. should be brought to the church before 10 a.m. on Saturday, October 4th.

8th, Wednesday. **Harvest Supper** and Social in Memorial Hall, 7-30 p.m. During the evening the fruit and vegetables will be auctioned for church funds.

11th, Saturday. **Gift Day.** (Parishioners will be receiving a letter from the Vicar and Churchwardens). The Vicar will be in church at 10 a.m. to 11-45 a.m. and 2-30 p.m. to 6 p.m. to receive the gifts and pronounce a blessing.

12th, 19th, 26th, Sundays. Services as usual. Holy Baptism October 12th, 3 p.m.

Mother's Union. The speaker on October 1st will be Mrs. Champion. Members are asked to bring friends to this meeting. Tea will be served by Mrs. Piggitt and Mrs. Haimes.

On October 15th the Vicar will give a talk on the Lambeth Report on the Family. This will be followed by discussion. Tea will be served by Mrs. Hodges. E.G.B.

Sunday School Outing. Our outing this year took place on the 20th August, and we chose the Wildfowl Trust at Slimbridge for a visit. The weather was fine and sunny, and the whole party of 29 children and 10 adults had a wonderful time watching the wildfowl and climbing the Tower for a marvellous view of the Severn Estuary. Even the wildfowl seemed to enter into the spirit of the party, delighting us all with their diving antics, and posing perfectly for cameras. Every minute was enjoyed and time passed much too quickly.

We are again indebted to Mr. J. Drysdale who paid for the delicious tea, of which we were all ready to partake after our outdoor ramble. Each year he tells me what pleasure this gives him and wishes that he always had such "good value for money".

The drive via Tewkesbury and Gloucester going, and over Cleeve Hill and Winchcombe returning was most enjoyable. As usual, the children were extremely well behaved giving no trouble, but I would like to thank all adults of the party, including the Vicar and Mrs. Braby, for their kindness in caring for the children's safety and comfort. I feel sure that all adults enjoyed it more, because of the obvious pleasure of the children, A.L.C.

We too should all like to thank Miss Cox for the excellent arrangements and careful organisation. Editor.

Choir Outing. Mrs. Collett is to be congratulated on the excellent arrangements she made for the Choir outing on August 27th. Leaving Wickhamford at 1 p.m. in bright sunshine and picking up various members and friends including The Vicar and Mrs. Braby with Jonathan and Mary the party drove to Warwick, there making a tour of the historic Castle and grounds. Then on to Leamington where there was an opportunity for shopping before enjoying the welcome tea awaiting us at Bobby's.

After tea most of the party visited the famous Gardens and at 6-30 p.m. joined the coach and drove home through the lovely leafy lanes, after a happy and rewarding afternoon.

All who enjoyed this trip must feel grateful to those kind people who made it possible. D.C.

Women's Institute. An evening tour to Hidcote Manor gardens was very much enjoyed by members last month, returning to the memorial Hall for a short business meeting. Delightful home-made refreshments were given by Mrs. Parry, who was warmly thanked by Mrs. S. Carter. A request was made for Christmas gifts for the mentally sick. Mrs. Folkes volunteered to be sick visitor for the ensuing month. G.M.H.

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Why not consult the Local Secretary?

Notice to Members:—Monthly Lodges: Second Wednesday in month, Wheatsheaf Inn 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.