

BADSEY, ALDINGTON and WICKHAMFORD PARISH REVIEW

JUNE, 1969

PRICE 4/- PER ANNUM

Vicar (& Rural Dean): REV. P. BRABY, M.A.

(Tel. Badsey 343)

CHURCH OF ST. JAMES, BADSEY.

SUNDAY SERVICES:

First Sunday	...	...	Holy Communion 8 and 11 a.m. (said). People's Service 6-45 p.m.
Second Sunday	...	...	Family Eucharist 10-15 a.m. Evensong 6-45 p.m.
Third Sunday	..	...	Holy Communion 8 a.m. Evensong 6-45 p.m.
Fourth Sunday	...	...	Holy Communion 8 a.m. Mattins and Holy Baptism 11 a.m. Sung Eucharist 6-45 p.m.
Fifth Sunday	...	..	Holy Communion 8 a.m. Family Service 10-15 a.m. Evensong 6-45 p.m.
Holy Baptism	...	...	See 4th Sunday. (Parents must see the Vicar personally at least seven days before).
Sunday School	...	...	10 a.m. Over 8, in church. Under 8, Parish Room and Meeting House.

WEEK-DAY SERVICES. According to notice in porch.

Churchwardens	...	...	Mrs. N. Clark, Pennyfields, Aldington. Mr. D. W. Hartwell, 35, Willersey Road.
Clerk	...	...	Mr. E. Mitchell, 68, Synehurst.

CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, WICKHAMFORD.

SUNDAY SERVICES:

First Sunday and Festivals	...	...	Holy Communion 9 a.m. Evensong 5-30 (3-0 Nov. to Feb.).
Second Sunday	...	...	Evensong and Holy Baptism 3 p.m. (all the year).
Third Sunday	...	...	Holy Communion (with hymns) 11 a.m. Evensong 5-30 (3-0 Nov. to Feb.).
Fourth & Fifth Sundays	...	...	Evensong 5-30 (3-0 Nov. to Feb.).
Holy Baptism	...	...	See 2nd Sunday. (Parents must see the Vicar at least seven days before).
Sunday School	...	...	11 a.m. (except 3rd Sunday), Village Hall.

WEEK-DAY SERVICES. According to notice in porch.

Churchwardens	...	...	Mr. J. E. Parry, Wickham House. (Badsey 244). Mr. H. J. Dunkerley, C.B.E., Gallisport Farm, Broadway. Tel. Badsey 395.
Clerk	...	...	Mr. C. H. Willis, 35, Pitchers Hill.

THE VICAR'S LETTER

19th May, 1969

My dear People,

I cannot tell you my reactions to the controversial T.V. play, "Son of Man", because there weren't any. I didn't see it. (Later on, I will tell you why I didn't).

Not that I haven't heard from others what they thought of it, or read some of the comments in newspapers. Some people say that for the first time the person of Jesus was made credible to them. Others say that this was totally unlike the Son of Man portrayed in the Gospels.

Dennis Potter was trying to portray Jesus the Man as he appears to him - not starting with the Christ proclaimed in the Church's creeds. And after all, it was that way the disciples started: they first knew Jesus as a man. He did not carry around with him credentials to prove that he was the Son of God. He let them work that out for themselves. It was only after they had spent quite a lot of time with him that he sprang two questions on them. First, an easy one to answer: What do other people say I am? Then the much harder one: Yes, but how about you? Who do you say that I am? Simon Peter blurts out the earliest Christian creed: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God". He hadn't been taught that: it came to him as a revelation.

Dennis Potter evidently has not made the same discovery of the living Christ as the apostles did, who knew Jesus in the flesh. But when someone takes Jesus seriously, not as a shadowy symbolic figure but a real person, however inadequate their understanding of him, sooner or later it is the living Christ who takes hold of them, and they find themselves saying, "My Lord and my God!"

Which end do we begin?

For centuries the Christian Church has, on the whole, been teaching people about Christ the other way round: "He came down to earth from heaven, who is God and Lord of all. He was the Son of God - something out of this world - though actually he was quite human". We start children off where the disciples didn't start at all - with the Christmas story. A miraculous birth, choirs of angels, portents in the sky. The disciples' story of Jesus began on an ordinary morning when they were mending their nets and a man came along and asked to borrow a boat. An everyday sort of thing. Later they were to learn that this was no ordinary everyday man. Later still this discovery was expressed in the great affirmations of the Creed: "God of God, Light of Light... by whom all things were made".

What is happening in our time is a great revolution in Christian education, though it has hardly yet got under way. The old method was to dish out as dogmas the discoveries the Church has made about Christ. The teacher supplied the answer to the question: What have other people said that he is? Instead of this, we are finding that the only real Christian education is to let Our Lord put the question: "But who do you say that I am?"

Ban the Bible

Now I will tell you why I missed the T.V. play, "Son of Man". That evening I was at Christ Church, Oxford, at a conference arranged for parsons who have the good fortune to be in benefices of which Ch. Ch. are the patrons. I was hearing a lecture on "Religion and the Adolescent" by the well-known Christian educationalist Mr. Harold Loukes. Mr. Loukes, with his great experience of the teenage mind, is quite sure that the boredom and indifference of most young people towards the Christian religion is the fruit of R.E. lessons at school. And not only in secondary schools. Long before they get there,

children's minds have been conditioned against a genuine grasp of Christianity, as relevant to life in the 20th century. Why? Because the great mistake of religious syllabuses has been to treat the Bible as a text book. The Bible is strong adult stuff. It is X Certificate material, and not meant for the immature. Certainly it is not a book from which 'stories to tell the children' can be picked out, in isolation from their context and unrelated to the great Biblical themes. No wonder that, in later life, people class the Bible in their minds with Aesop's Fables or Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales.

Mr. Loukes would introduce the Bible at a much later stage in the child's religious development. It is no good, in the climate of our age, presenting religion to young people as a series of propositions. The Christian teacher has to help his pupils in their own discovery of God, through seeing love at work in the world around them and in people. Later on, somewhere about the 3rd year in secondary school, he says: "There is one man who has always been a centre of controversy as to what people have thought about him, and still is". Then the adolescent is introduced to the Man Jesus, and does some hard work on the Bible.

The Teacher's Dilemma

Harold Loukes is not the only Christian educationalist who would like to remove the Bible (and Bible stories) altogether from primary school syllabuses. Lots of experts have been saying it for some years now. No doubt the agreed syllabuses will eventually catch up with this new trend. (Later there will be a reaction, and the cry, "Return to the Bible!") But, in the meantime, what is the Primary school teacher (or the Sunday School teacher) expected to do? A scheme like that outlined in the previous paragraph might be ideal if the same person (or a team working together) had the sole responsibility for a child's religious education all the way through, from nursery to sixth form. In practice that is not so.

Is the Primary or Sunday School teacher or parent to withhold any presentation of the Gospel story or of direct Christian teaching, on the assumption that somebody else is going to do it later, at a more suitable time? Of course this assumption cannot be made. Nor can it be assumed that the child is never going to come across the name of Jesus Christ until he reaches the proper stage in the educational scheme. What is the Christian teacher to do who knows that many of his class come from homes where the holy Name is only invoked as a swear-word? What of the Christian parent who feels that the presentation of Our Lord in television plays or children's books is inadequate or misleading?

Puzzled Parents

Parents. Yes, they are the one constant element in the child's educational career. We parents fall too easily into the way of passing the buck to the schools when we can, and blaming the schools for the defects which become apparent. Public opinion polls show parents overwhelmingly in favour of the continuance of compulsory religious education in schools. The humanists maintain that what the majority of parents want is moral education for the children rather than indoctrination with religious concepts. They may well be right about this. On the other hand there are many parents who would sincerely like their children to grow up as Christians, so long as somebody else with the proper know-how can do it for them. For heaven's sake, they say, keep the R.E. going in the schools, because we haven't a clue how to teach religion ourselves.

In fact it is the parents who have all the clues in their hands, if they will make use of them. The child makes his discovery of God from the community in which he

lives; the closest community he experiences, and the earliest, is his home. Here the adventure of religious exploration begins. How will he first learn there is a God? Not in books or precepts, but from the welcoming love of parents. In the words of Addison's hymn:

"Unnumbered comforts to my soul
Thy tender care bestowed,
Before my infant heart conceived
From Whom those blessings flowed".

How will he learn to pray? Not by repeating like a parrot certain words and formulae. Long before he can speak, he can learn what prayer is by seeing his parents pray, and perceiving that this is something intensely real and meaningful to them. How will he learn that God is worth more than anything in the world? By joining from his earliest years with his parents amid the Christian congregation, in worship (declaring the worthship) of God.

Alpha and Omega

These are the grass-roots of Christian education. Without this the most gifted and dedicated school and Sunday school teachers can do little that will last. (There are exceptions, of course, but they are few). Launched from such a base, the child's exploration into the mysterious universe of religious experience can proceed without the fear which paralyses or the boredom which stifles. "I am the Beginning and the Ending, says the Lord".

Your sincere friend and Vicar,

PETER BRABY.

Christian Aid Week Result. Badsey £51-4-0; Aldington £7-10-0; Wickhamford £15-0-0. Total: £73-14-0. Increase of £8-5-6 on 1968. Congratulations to all collectors, and to Mrs. Churchill, our organiser.

BADSEY AND ALDINGTON NOTES

Church Services

June

- 1 **TRINITY SUNDAY.** Special envelopes for Ordination Candidates' Fund. Services as for 1st Sun. 6-45 People's Service.
- 4 Wed. 10-0 H.C. & M.U. Admission Service. (Collect, Epistle & Gospel as for Corpus Christi).
- 8 **Trinity I.** As for 2nd Sun.
- 10 Tues. 9-0 H.C.
- 11 Wed. **St. Barnabas, Apostle.** 10-0 H.C.
- 15 **Trinity 2.** As for 3rd Sun.
- 18 Wed. 10-0 H.C.
- 22 **Trinity 3.** St. Alban, M. As for 4th Sun.
- 24 Tues. **Nativity of St. John Baptist.** (H.C. See Wickhamford Notes).
- 25 Wed. 10-0 H.C.; 3-0 Pram Service.
- 29 **St. Peter, Apostle & Martyr.** Trinity 4. As for 5th Sun. 10-15 Family Service.

Other Events

- May 31 (Sat.) Church Fête, Vicarage Lawn, 2-30.
June 6 (Fri.) Synod of Diocesan Clergy in Cathedral. Referendum on Anglican-Methodist Unity.
" 7 (Sat.) Choir Outing to Southsea.
" 10 (Tues.) Evesham Deanery Chapter meet at Badsey (a.m.).
2-30 Parochial Prayer Meeting at Vicarage.
7-15 P.C.C. Meeting.

- " 14 (Sat.) Badsey School Fête.
" 21 (Sat.) U.S.P.G. Exhibition, Walker Hall, Evesham.
" 27 (Fri.) Diocesan Conference.
" 28 (Sat.) Brit. & For. Bible Society Fête, Methodist Church, Evesham.
" 30 - July 4 Diocesan Clergy Convention at Keble College, Oxford.

Mothers' Union. June 4 Wed. 10-0 Corporate Communion and Admission Service.

- 10 Tues. Prayer Group Meeting at the Vicarage.
17 Tues. Outing to St. Mary's Convent at Wantage, leaving Wheatsheaf at 1 o'clock. Will anyone wishing to go please contact me as soon as possible.

J.B.

Holy Baptism

April 27 Patricia Jane Hodgkins; Sharon Marshall.

Burial, R.I.P.

May 14 George David Malins, aged 77.

Our prayerful sympathy with Mrs. Malins and all the members of the family. George, a worthy Christian man, was much beloved. He bore his long illness with great patience and good humour, devotedly nursed by wife and family. May he know refreshment and peace in the loving care of God.

Jottings. Heartiest congratulations to Badsey Rangers on a very successful football season. At the time of writing they are still at the top of the Stratford League.

We look forward to offering our very best wishes and congratulations to Mr. J. T. Batchelor when he celebrates his 90th birthday on 29th June. Spry and athletic, and with the charm of an unaging Peter Pan, Mr. Batchelor is one of the marvels of Badsey. As an unflinching communicant, usually at early services and in all weathers, he is a splendid example to us all of devotion to Our Lord.

Mr. Fred Wheatley, after months of waiting, is now in Worcester Royal Infirmary, and has had operations on both hips. Mrs. M. Keyte is in hospital recovering from a stroke. Home from hospital are Mr. Cyril Freeman, who had quite a long spell recovering from heart trouble, Mrs. H. Young, who underwent an operation, and Mr. Walter Jelfs of Aldington. Mr. George Knight, son of Mrs. Florence Knight, has had a serious operation in the Radcliffe Infirmary, but seems to be doing well. Hazel Franklin had a nasty accident on the last day of the Blackminster School holiday in Switzerland, with multiple injuries to her right arm. Mrs. R. Churchill has been laid up for some weeks with sciatica. Mr. Edgar Mitchell is making good progress now in Avon-side Hospital. We do not forget our other parishioners there: Mrs. Emma Cole, Miss 'Polly' Hutchings, Miss D. Harrison, Mrs. Douse, Mrs. L. Johnson, Mr. Blunsom, and more recently, Mrs. Huxley, so patiently doing her best to communicate in spite of losing her powers of speech. Her husband has recently undergone an operation on his hand. Remember the sick in your prayers.

Servers for June. 1st, 8-0 D. Hatherley; 11-0 A. Clements; 6-45 T. Bell. 8th, 10-15 M. Clements (Server), R. Keen (Crucifer); 6-45 C. Hartwell. 15th, 8-0 N. Wild; 6-45 M. Exon. 22nd, 8-0 C. Hartwell; 11-0 (M. & Baptism) D. Barrand; 6-45 C. Tucker (Server), A. Clements (Crucifer). 29th, 8-0 S. Gresty; 10-15 (Fam. Service) T. Bell; 6-45 M. Clements.

War Memorial Flowers. June 8th, Mrs. L. Reeves; 22nd, Mrs. Hurman; 29th, Mrs. Betteridge.

Acknowledgments. In Memoriam 10/-: Dorothy Stella Anderson, A. Leslie Byrd, Mr. & Mrs. A. T. Hart. Birthday 5/-: Mrs. M. Sladden.

WICKHAMFORD NOTES

Church Services

June

- 1 **TRINITY SUNDAY.** As for 1st Sun. Special Envelopes for Ordination Candidates' Fund.
- 8 **Trinity 1.** As for 2nd Sun. 3-0 E. & Holy Baptism.
- 15 **Trinity 2.** As for 3rd Sun.
- 22 **Trinity 3.** As for 4th Sun.
- 24 **Tues. NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST. PATRONAL FEAST.** 7-30 p.m. Holy Communion.
- 29 **St. Peter, Apostle & Martyr. Trinity 4.** As for 5th Sun.

P.C.C. Meeting, Wed., June 11, 7-30 p.m.

Other Events. See Badsey Notes.

Holy Matrimony

May 10 **Martin Michael Fewtrell, of Worcester, and Janet Christine Sturt, of Wickhamford**

Jottings. Mr. Jim Stanley is in hospital at the time of writing. Mrs. E. M. Griffin, in Avonside Hospital, is doing very well, always cheerful and contented, and a grand tonic for drooping spirits. Mrs. Pitts is having treatment for her feet. Mrs. Doris Carter has become very infirm. Remember in your prayers the chronically ill, such as Mrs. Rose Franklin, Miss Ethel Colley and Mrs. E. G. Hall.

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