

# THE CEYLON CHURCHMAN

( THE MAGAZINE OF THE DIOCESES OF COLOMBO & KURUNAGALA )



*Pro Deo et Ecclesia*



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SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 1981

Annual Subscription Local : Rs. 30/- Foreign: £ 2 & \$ 4

Registered at the G. P. O. as a Newspaper.

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*The Editor will be grateful to receive original articles, comments on articles appearing in the "Ceylon Churchman" and news items from parishes, persons and institutions in connection with the Church if they are of wide interest. If contributions are to be considered for acceptance they must be short, typed in doublespacing on one side of the paper, and on the basis that the Editor will publish portions of articles or letters when publication in full is impossible. They should reach him before the 1st day of the preceding month and on the basis of bi-monthly publication.*

*The Editor will be glad to publish news reports from Churches, Parishes and Christian organisations, when authenticated by the Vicar Chairman or Secretary.*

*Owing to many reasons, including considerations of space, the Editor regrets very much that he will not be able to publish all contributions sent to him nor will he be able to correspond on the merits of such material.*

*Contributors who wish to have their articles returned to them, when they cannot be published, are kindly requested to include a self-addressed envelope with adequate stamps for returning the contribution by post.*

*When articles from other publications are submitted, please ensure that permission from the author and the Editor of the publication is annexed to the article sent as they can be published only on such a basis.*

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Please send all literary material for publication, to The Editor, Ceylon Churchman, Diocesan Office, Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 7, before the 1st of the month preceding publication.

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# THE CEYLON CHURCHMAN

Vol. LXXVII Nos.10 and 11 SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER-1981

## THE BISHOP OF COLOMBO'S LETTER.

My dear Friends,

In August and September last it was my privilege to participate in the 5th Assembly of the Anglican Consultative Council at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It was good to be in fellowship with a rich cross-section of Bishops, Clergy and Laity of the the Anglican Communion during that period. It was also edifying to see once again the rich resources of knowledge, expertise, experience and insights that are available within the Church to help us in our respective missions in different parts of the world. In the Diocese I am sure that we can gain much enrichment by having more and more visitors from outside who would come and open more and more windows in our minds to what we could be and what we could do.

In the Consultations on Christian Unity held under the auspices of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, they were in Mt. Lavinia, and around Colombo. We then had the Most. Revd. Stuart Blanch, Lord Archbishop of York and Mrs. Blanch. In January 1982 we look forward to a visit from The Most Revd. Robert Runcie, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. This will be the first time that an Archbishop of Canterbury has visited Sri Lanka. Later in January we shall have the Revd. Michael Harper of the Spiritual Renewal Movement of the Church of England.

Shortly after my return from ACC-5 we had our Diocesan Council. Making provision for those who in conscience cannot join the Church of Sri Lanka was the most important concern of the Council this year. It was, however, clear that much

more work has to be done in the way of our familiarising ourselves with the contents of the Church Union Scheme and with the implications of legislation that will need to be passed prior to Church Union. Steps are being taken towards this.

I am deeply concerned at our present situation. There are those who are quite clearly not in favour of Church Union on the basis of the present Scheme; there are others who, with equal fervour, are impatient that we are not moving forward; there are yet others who appear to be confused by the contrary points of view that are expressed. In this situation I have a duty to perform by all. As regards the theological and liturgical aspects of the Scheme, I have no comments to make except to note that the highest Consultative bodies of the Anglican Communion have pronounced what is stated in the Scheme to be sound and adequate. To me there is a finality in such pronouncements in relation to matters, theological and liturgical. In matters of Faith and Order we cannot override them. In practical implications of Church Union there still may be questions, problems, doubts and fears. On the one hand, not to heed these fears etc., in others would be a reproachable lack of charity; on the other hand for those who have such fears etc., to be enslaved to them may be a lack of faith.

More than ever we now need to be in the grip of God the Holy Spirit who alone can lead us in the path of unity and love.

On Sunday, 25th October I was happy to re-hallow S. Paul's Oratory in the Pettah. It brought in a streak of light to all, especially to those who live in this very busy and very congested part of the city. I am very grateful to the Vicar and people of All Saints' Church, Pettah whose zeal made this restoration possible.

Confirmations and other pastoral needs have taken me to various parts of the Diocese, among them being, S. Michael's, Polwatte, S. Francis of Assisi, Mt. Lavinia, SS. Mary & John' Nugegoda, S. James' Chilaw (where they also kept the 150th

Anniversary of the Consecration of the Church), Christ Church, Mutwal, Gal Oya Valley (at the farmers' colony in Bakki Ela), S. James, Egoda Uyana, Christ Church, Dehiwela, Emmanuel Memorial Church, Maradana, S. Margaret's Kotagala (where the Confirmation Service was preceded by adult Baptisms early in the morning in the cold, cold waters of the stream just below the Church) Madampitiya Chapel, and Christ Church, Kotte. Before Christmas I shall have held Confirmation Services at S. Luke's, Ratnapura, at Koslanda, the Church of the Ascension Bandarawela, S. Paul's, Milagiriya and St. Nicholas' Trincomalee.

There are very clear signs of Mission outreach springing up in the Southern Province and in the Gampaha-Veyangoda Mission. I am hoping to set up the old building at Buona Vista, Galle, as a Conference and Retreat Centre.. The congregation of SS.. Mary & John, Nugegoda, have commenced an ambitious and well-planned building scheme with a clear objective of mission. S. James', Egoda Uyana, has set up a Community Service Centre with plans for a wide outreach to meet the needs of the people in the fast developing area. The large scale restoration work on the Church buildings of S. Michael's, Polwatte and Holy Emmanuel, Moratuwa, are commendable for the dedicated efforts of the local congregations. The Centenary of S. Luke's, Borella, has been kept with a fervour and dedication that matched the occasion.

Transfers of clergy in terms of the current regulations take place in the first week of January. This year 34 clergymen move on transfer as Vicars and Assistant Curates.

An event of importance that took place in our country in the recent times is the visit of Her Majesty the Queen, Elizabeth II of England and H.R.H. Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. They won the hearts of our people wherever they went. It was good to read in the British Papers their appreciation of the spontaneous welcome accorded to the Royal couple by our people

I was happy to be present at the functions arranged in honour of the Royal couple by His Excellency the President and by the Mayor of Colombo; and my wife and I were privileged to participate in the Royal Banquet given by Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh.

At the turn of another year our hearts go up in praise and thanks for the past and in prayer, supplication and affirmation of faith as we face the future. In the words of Leslie Weatherhead we may say.

“Grant me the sense of the presence, born of Thine indwelling and of Thine enfolding love and let me increasingly pause to recollect that, in every circumstance, I live within Thy life and am always the object of Thy Care. The perilous barque of my life has been launched on the sea of Thy life, and no ship, go where it may, can sail off the ocean. I cannot drift beyond his love and care”

Wishing you all every blessing,

Yours sincerely,  
† Swithin Colombo  
Bishop of Colombo

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### Violence Honoured

There is violence because we have daily honoured violence. Any half-educated man in a good suit can make his fortune by concocting a television show whose brutality is photographed in sufficiently monstrous detail. Who produces these shows, who pays to sponsor them, who is honoured for acting in them ?

Are these people delinquent psychopaths, in slinking tenement<sup>t</sup> streets?

No, they are the pillars of society, our honoured men, our exemplars of success and social attainment!

—Arthur Miller, noted Playright. The New York Times - June 8, 1968

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## IN THIS ISSUE

This issue of the **Ceylon Churchman** too comes late as we try to catch up with the **Pinting** problems and we apologise to our readers for keeping them waiting. If we had our own Church Press doubtless our problems would certainly have been less.

In this issue, besides the usual features, we are glad to be able to publish the **Colombo Diocesan Sermon** and two contributions from **S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia** (through Fr Richard Peries S.J) and from **S. Thomas Prep. School, Kollupitiya** (through Mr. J.S.L.Fernando) which contain much food for thought.

\* \* \*

We specially commend the articles on **Life after Death and on the Care of the Dying**. For Death is a subject rarely spoken of or helpfully dealt with in Christian circles. Death, we sing, is a door to life beyond. But we only prepare for life, not for death or for the life beyond. Our proper concern for "the people" and their involvement in politics and economics should not lead us away from eternal values. If we are misled then we suffer from a failure of character and of relationships based on eternal values.

**Mrs. Alfreda de Silva's** article shows how we could use Church-yards constructively-without any offence to the dead. And the question arises why we should not use all Church premises far more constructively than many generally do as acts of Christian witness of concern both for life and death.

\* \* \*

We still need **more news** from the Rural Deans, Church organisations and parishes. Couldn't clergy, lay officers, Chairmen and Secretaris of Church Committees, and Heads of Christian institutions help?

We publish much ecumenical material in the **Ceylon Churchman**. We shall gladly publish more if it is sent to us by those concerned according to the conditions "**Concerning Contributions**" and we shall certainly be very thankful for this.

C. N. V. F

## WHAT OUR BISHOPS THINK

### What is the Church for?

#### 1. Introduction:

The Church exists for God - to worship him and to be a sign and agent of his Kingdom. Faithfulness to God through Jesus Christ in the Spirit is the basis of its existence, the inspiration of all it does and strives to become. As God in Jesus commits himself to our humanity, the worship of God through Jesus directs us towards every human search for free fulfilment and joy; and brings us up against everything that distorts, imprisons or ignores the lives, needs, and hopes of men, women and children. Because we worship God in his glory we are called to seek the glory of man.

The calling of the Church is therefore clear - to worship and to witness, to serve and to suffer. Our difficulties do not lie in doubts about this calling or in uncertainties about the truth and the power of what God reveals and offers through Jesus and in the Spirit. Our difficulties have two other sources. On the one hand our own sinfulness often distorts or holds up our responses even to what we know or should do or say or be. On the other hand the complexities and turbulence of our societies and of the world at large often leave us bewildered about what is going on and uncertain about what our responses should be. But we also know that God saves from sin and is with us in the midst of bewilderment. Thus our repeated sins do not deprive us of the opportunities to serve God and our neighbours nor does our frequent bewilderment leave us without indication from God as to how we are to begin to seek his will. For us the very continuing of the Church in worship, in fellowship, and in hope, amidst the realities of sin and bewilderment, is itself a sign and sacrament that there is a God in whom all may realistically trust and to whom all may look for salvation.

It is against this background and in the light of this faith that we wish to share some insights and suggestions that have emerged out of our brief time together in which we have exchanged something of our experiences, our understandings, and our perplexities. We report them knowing that they are but tokens and indications of what the people of God can and will learn as they get on, locally and particularly, with the tasks that challenge them and seize the opportunities that open up to them.

## 2. **Worship and mission :**

The Church is both 'a holy priesthood' to offer God spiritual sacrifices, and 'God's own people' called to proclaim his wonderful deeds (1 Peter 2: 5-9). Worship and mission are, therefore the main tasks of the Church, but these functions are often separated. Some fruitful churchmen are diligent in their Sunday worship but have no comparable concern for their Christian responsibility in the world. Others are deeply involved in compassionate service, but impatient with the Church's traditional worship. This polarization between worship and mission is both damaging to the Church's health and a serious departure from God's purpose. We are concerned to see it overcome.

Each has within it an element of the other. There is a sense in which worship is mission. To attend a Christian place of worship publicly is to identify oneself as a Christian, which is in many parts of the world a costly testimony. In our eucharistic worship we are not only celebrating the Lord's death and resurrection, but actually proclaiming him as Lord (1 Cor. 11:26). Conversely, there is a sense in which mission is worship. For worship is our loving response to God and must be expressed not only in liturgical words but also in practical deeds. Worship and mission also stimulate one another. For to acknowledge God's infinite worth moves us to want others to do the same, while to work and witness in the world redounds to the praise and glory of God. So

whenever we assemble as the people of God to worship him, it is not in order to escape from the world, but rather to prepare ourselves to return to it. We gather for worship and scatter for mission.

The word 'mission' denotes 'sentness'. It embraces everything the Church is sent into the world to do. What this is we discover from the mission of Jesus, since he specifically made his mission the model of ours when he said 'As the Father sent me, so I send you' (John 20:21). He came both preaching and serving. The same balanced combination of words and works, of witness and service, of evangelism and social action, is needed in our Christian mission today.

To proclaim the Word will always remain a primary Christian task. For God has entrusted his Church with good news to share with the world. It is good news of his reign, which broke into the world through Jesus Christ. Those who have received God's free gift of new life in Christ have the constant duty, joy, and privilege of sharing the good news with others. This should be the spontaneous overflow of hearts filled with Christ. Yet there is also need for a thorough training of Church members both in personal evangelism and in the nurture of converts into maturity in Christ. Indeed, one of the chief functions of pastors is to equip God's people for their ministry in the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:12), taking care not to monopolize it themselves.

God still calls some of his people in every Church and country to be cross-cultural messengers of the Gospel. For there are still millions of people in the world who have never heard of Jesus Christ or who have never had an adequate opportunity to respond to him. So missionaries are still urgently needed and should flow freely from and to all countries. Their responsibility is not to export a culturally-conditioned form of Christianity (Western or any other), but, humbly to serve the indigenous Church as it seeks to develop or renew its own authentic form of Christianity within its own local culture.

The mission of the Church is not confined to evangelism, however. Jesus did more than proclaim God's Kingdom; he demonstrated it in his own person and in his works of power and love. All human need, whatever form it took, moved him to compassion. Not only did he feed the hungry and heal the sick but he risked his reputation by championing those whom society rejected and befriending the friendless. We have no doubt that like Christ and in his Name, the Church today should take its stand alongside the deprived, the disadvantaged, and the oppressed in the strong solidarity of love. We also believe that it is a legitimate - even an obligatory - extension of Christ's compassion that Christians involve themselves with others in the quest for better social and economic structures. Unjust structures dehumanize people; that is why Christian compassion demands justice for them. Christians are not as powerless as they often think. In some situations only by prayer, suffering, and the silent exhibition of a better way; but in others by the resistance and denunciation of evil, by fearless witness to truth, righteousness, and freedom, by pressure on public opinion and in other ways, it is possible for Christians to help bring about social change, thus acting as the salt and light which Jesus said his followers should be.

Jesus added, however, that if it is to be effective, the salt must retain its saltiness and the light must be allowed to shine (Matt:5: 13-16). In other words, 'being' precedes 'doing', and before the Church can actively engage in mission, it must itself be renewed for mission. Nothing hinders the mission of the Church, both its evangelistic and social mission, more than its failure to be what it claims to be, and to practise what it preaches.

If we preach the Incarnation, then we must ourselves live by the principle of the Incarnation, humbling ourselves as Christ humbled himself, serving as he served, renouncing affluence and cultivating a simple life-style. and identifying ourselves with the world in its pain.

If we preach the Cross, then we must ourselves take up the Cross and follow Christ, dying to our own self-centredness in order to live for others, loving, forgiving and serving our enemies, and overcoming evil with good.

If we preach the Resurrection, then we must ourselves live in its power, experiencing deliverance from the bondage of sin and fear of death, and eagerly expecting the completion of the new creation in Christ.

If we preach the Ascension, then we must ourselves submit to the universal authority of the reigning Christ, longing that every tongue should confess him as Lord and that more and more of human society should come under his rule.

If we preach Pentecost, then we must ourselves demonstrate the power of the Holy Spirit in our own lives, as he forms Christ in us and binds us together in love.

If we preach the Church as a reconciled and reconciling community, then we must set ourselves resolutely against the re-erection of the racial, social, and sexual barriers which Christ abolished (Eph. 2:11 ff., Gal. 3:28), and must seek his grace to become the united, accepting, caring, and supportive fellowship which he means us to be.

### 3. The Church as a sign to the world:

If the Church has constantly to strive to be sufficiently broken and sufficiently open to act as a sacrament of the love of God what sort of a community ought it to be?

The Church needs to be a supportive community. It must be a place of healing and restoration for those who know their need of forgiveness and renewal. It must help to make people whole. It must be a community of repentant sinners, who ought to be able to accept and welcome other sinners, because all belong to it only by the mercy and grace of God.

In practice, though, there are difficulties because the Church also, and rightly, tries to witness to Christian standards, and may resent the dilution of its standards by those who fall too obviously below them. The conflict between this openness to sinners and to witness against sin is frequently felt most acutely by the clergy,

and especially by bishops. On the one hand they stand for the rigorous claims of the Gospel, while on the other hand they want and need to show pastoral concern for those who have fallen short and sometimes feel themselves personally rejected by the Church. This tension at the heart of the Christian community can be constructive if it is understood and accepted and shared by all.

A Church which aims to heal human brokenness must also inevitably be a suffering community. Its concern may not be confined to its own members, however great their needs. Jesus devoted much of his ministry to those whom the world of his day despised. His Cross is present wherever human beings suffer. The Church feeds on broken bread in the Eucharist, which speaks of the brokenness of human life.

Christians have to ask themselves, therefore, how alert they are to the different kinds of suffering in their midst. In addition to the obvious injustices of material poverty and physical oppression, there are more subtle deprivations and disadvantages. To be labelled 'non-White' is to suffer the indignity of being defined in terms of something one is not and so one's identity is threatened. To have had a poor education is to be constantly outpaced by those who started life with greater advantages. To feel inferior and unwanted is an additional burden on the suffering of those who can find no work.

A suffering community knows about these things, by being where the suffering is. And this poses questions about the style of Church life, and that of its ministers. A Church which seems to belong to a particular class or section of society is not only falling those whom it seems to ignore, but impoverishing its own life as well. A bishop who seems to belong to another world whether the world of a secure ecclesiastical in-group or the world of affluence and privilege, is unable to reach those to whom he has been sent.

This is why deliberate attempts to cross the barriers of race, sex, class, and affluence contribute to the Church's own liberation.

For suffering is not an end in itself. The Christian message is one of transformation and joy and liberation. But the joy must be the joy of those who have faced the world's pain and overcome it by love. And the liberation must follow judgement, a judgement in these days ministered not least by the world's poor.

A supportive and suffering community can become a liberated and liberating community only as it is willing to lose its life in the service of God's kingdom of love and justice, and in so doing find its life and identity. This is Christ's way. To want liberation by itself on our own terms and in our own strength has too often proved to be the road to further enslavement.

To sum up; the task of the Church as we see it is to unite all people in the worship of God; to proclaim the good news of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ; to work for justice, peace, and freedom in the world and to pray regularly for the poor and oppressed, as well as for those in authority; to affirm Christian standards in matters of behaviour; and to seek constantly to be radically renewed in truth, holiness and love, that it may visibly embody the Gospel it proclaims.

**This is the third instalment for personal, group and parish study of the Report of the Lambeth Conference 1978 - CIO-London. — pp. 54 - 58 Sections 1, 2 / 3.**

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## COLOMBO DIOCESAN COUNCIL SERMON

Preached by the Revd. Gerald de Alwis, Vicar, Christ Church,  
Galkissa on 6th October 1981 in the Cathedral Church  
of Christ the Living Saviour

*"Lord, I Pray Thee, open his eyes that he may see"*

I have taken as my text some words from the fascinating story which we find in the 2nd book of King's chapter 6:vs:8-16.



This is not a case of healing a man who was blind. We know that the prophet Elisha performed many wonderful miracles but in this case the young servant had no physical disability. He could see quite well. There was nothing wrong with his eyes. In fact it was because he saw so well that he was frightened and panicked when he saw the enemy of the King of Syria encircling the city. He was desperate and came to his master and said what any one would say at a moment like that. "*Alas my master what shall we do?*"

Although this young man had seen only the armies of the king, **Elisha** was able to see something more. He saw the armies of the Living God standing by - all ready to protect him. He knew that there was nothing to fear. He wanted the young man also to know this. "*Open his eyes that he may see*" he prayed to the Lord.

Blindness in the Bible is used as a symbol for ignorance and lack of insight. Although the disciples moved so closely with the Lord there were many occasions where they failed to see where He was leading them. Very often they could not understand His words or actions. When Our Lord spoke of His suffering and death they could not see how it was going to help them.

As our Lord told the messengers of John the Baptist anyone who had seen the signs that He was doing should have been able to recognise that He was the Promised Deliverer - the Messiah. The disciples had seen many signs but they were blind. Even after the Resurrection they still failed to understand the meaning of the events that had taken place. The Lord had to meet them again and open their eyes, as it happened on the road to Emmaus.

It was only after the coming of the Holy Spirit that their eyes were opened. It was the Holy Spirit that gave them the light to understand the things which Our Lord had tried to teach them for three long years. It is the same Holy Spirit that will guide and lead the Church and open our eyes to see the tasks that the Lord expects from us. But unless we are prepared to open our eyes unless we are willing to have our sight restored and made clearer, the Holy Spirit cannot and will not do this for us.

When Our Lord met blind Bartimeus He asked him what he exactly wanted. We may wonder why Our Lord asked such a strange question - it is because He wanted to be quite sure that Bartimeus really wanted his sight restored. You see, it is some times very convenient for us to be blind. It may be to our advantage at times to be blind or to pretend to be blind.

There are some people who would protest vehemently if someone were to tell them that they are blind. People who could see perfectly well even without the aid of a pair of spectacles are nevertheless blind at times. The tragedy is that they do not know that they are blind or they do not want to admit that they are blind. They think that they have seen all aspects of the matter - and there is nothing more that they need to see.

I believe that a great deal of misery could be avoided if we are always prepared to keep our eyes wide open and learn to see things in their proper light. We know that when our vision is not very clear we can make quite a lot of mistakes. We may see a piece of rope lying across our pathway and mistakenly think it is a serpent or we may not see the real serpent and tread on it, and suffer the consequences of our action.

So just as we need good sight if we are to avoid getting into trouble we need to keep our inward eyes wide open to see the vision that God has set before us.

During the next two or three days we would be sitting in Council and considering matters of great importance, matters affecting our whole life and specially matters of special importance to us, as members of the Diocese of Colombo. There are certain things about which we cannot do anything very much. The world is becoming more and more nervous with the great powers engaged in preparing more and more dangerous weapons, which could be used for destruction. We can only plead with them and pray for them. We have seen in our own country how people can behave when pride, hatred and greed take control over their lives. Here, as those who believe that all men are brothers, we can take concrete action.

The Church itself is faced with problems, and has not fully succeeded in influencing the lives of individuals specially those of young people, and given them direction. What we need is a real awakening, a revival, which should begin with each one of us. When we look at these things we can easily lose heart and like Elisha's servant cry out "*Alas . . . what shall we do?*"

Yes, the solutions are not easy to find. I do not think any one of us would imagine that we can find adequate remedies for the problems before us, during our discussions in Council. But that does not mean that we must not attempt to do what we can.

When Our Lord left this earth - there were not more than a hundred and twenty men and women who followed Him - even less than the representatives in our Diocesan Council this year, It was to these people that are Lord entrusted the great task of proclaiming the Gospel of Redemption. Who were these people? They were poor humble people. They did not have large funds to use for their work. They had not been to big Colleges or Universities, they did not have a high place in society - but they had one thing which was worth more than all these things which they did not possess. They had a simple and living Faith, They went about their work with real zeal and dedication. The Lord had given them a clear vision and they saw the Hand of the Lord directing them. Facing a hostile world with scanty resources their task could not even have been attempted if they had trusted in their own strength - they realized that they had unseen powers assisting them and like Elisha they could have said "They that are with us are more than they that are with them."

Our Council Sessions will open with prayers to God "*to teach our hearts by sending to us His Holy Spirit that we may have a right judgement in all things.*" This prayer will be said in vain if we come with our hearts and are eyes closed to the light that the Holy Spirit would give. Let us lay aside pride and prejudices and come to this Service to be truly led by the Spirit of God.

It is quite possible for us to think that we are being guided by the Holy Spirit when all the time we are only concerned about

our own interests - and determined to have our own way. We have to be very careful to see that our sinfulness, pride, hatred and arrogance do not blind us and make us so stubborn that we refuse to open our eyes and see things more closely. What God expects from us is sincerity and if we act in that spirit we can be certain that the Lord will provide us with His Grace and Power to carry out His Purposes in the world.

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## OVERCOMING LOVE

Sermon preached at the Chapel of the Transfiguration, St. Thomas College, Mt. Lavinia, on the Feast of the Transfiguration.

*by*

The Rev. Fr. Richard Peiris. S. J.

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ,

I'm a priest of the Roman Catholic Church who was once, quite a few years ago, a master in this great school in the last two years of Warden de Saram's term of office. They were during indeed two very happy years, in fact, among the happiest in my life. I've always loved to teach young people and I had all types of them here; very intelligent and very dull, quite a few just average; very gentle and very rough, respectful and anything but, also humble and eager to learn or troublesome and arrogant. Briefly it was a mirror of life outside, in the world.

In those now far off days it was unheard of for a Roman Catholic priest to be invited to deliver an address in an Anglican College Chapel on an occasion like this. But I must remind you that 23 long or short years have passed and brought their changes. 'The old order changeth giving place to the new' as Tennyson puts it. We've come to live in a more tolerant age, thanks partly to the late Pope John XXIII who suddenly flung open the doors and windows of a Church grown more than a little stuffy. In a real sense no one has a monopoly of the truth nor can Jesus Christ be

fragmented or divided: He's indivisible; as the letter to the Hebrews says, 'Jesus Christ yesterday, today and the same forever, Besides truth is what one lives and loves and how one does it.

I congratulate you, my dear boys, on your receiving Holy Communion for the first time which means, I hope, that you continue to receive this beautiful sacrament more and more devoutly to the end of your lives. Communion means communing with somebody and here it's no less a person than Jesus, the Lord and Saviour Himself. We enter into a growing intimacy with Him who is also our greatest, often only, friend. It's only our best friends we invite home to a meal, this is a universal custom. Now fancy, this is true, the Lord Himself inviting you and what is more, becoming the meal itself. To be our food for everyday to all eternity. Let our love for Him not grow old as it could easily do when the sacrament becomes routine.

Is all this difficult to swallow? Understandable, especially, in today's world of scientific and technological advance. We're told to see, measure and weigh and touch everything, only not believe. Even then some of Christ's own men left him. The greatest personality that ever came into the world is hidden in a thin wafer of unleavened bread. Of course it is the Risen Lord of glory who's present and sacramentally though really. We stumble here against Christianity's central paradox: appearance versus reality. Have a look at today's Transfiguration: we catch just a glimpse of the Son's eternal Glory with the Father, then back to normal as Peter, John and James knew him only too well, alas also their stumbling block and is it not of us all? We're left with the lasting lesson that if we would share the Lord's eternal glory, we must be ready here on earth to take our full share of His anonymity, sufferings and utter disgrace.

For my final examination I had to read a book by the Anglican theologian, Dr. Eric Mascall, entitled 'Corpus Christi' A revealing title indeed stressing too another aspect of communion: sociality. In recent times we've heard from various quarters an increasing emphasis on a Christian's social responsibility. You

are, dear boys, a privileged lot, enjoying better instruction, discipline, and extra curricular opportunities than your fellows in most other schools. As you go on then, try to share these with the less privileged. Never look down on them as being of a lower order; don't laugh at them because their English is faulty and dictation poor. Rather help them, share what you have. The same with sports. If you are a good swimmer and have even got your colours, share your know-how with someone in the pool who's just struggling to learn. Life, after all, is not all learning, success or sport. Ultimately what counts is a happy life fulfilled in an through love. To sum up, a man's interior union with God in Jesus Christ, though essential, is not to be seen but his love for the neighbour is and this is the sign of the former and touchstone.

The significance of today's occasion is well illustrated by this well known little poem by the great seventeenth century Anglican priest and poet, Goerge Herbert :

### Love

*Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,  
Guilty of dust and sin.*

*But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack  
From my first entrance in,  
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,  
If I lacked anything.*

*'A guest', I answered, 'worthy to be here'  
Love said, 'You shall be he'.*

*'I, the unkind, ungrateful ? Ah, my dear,  
I cannot look on thee'.*

*Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,  
'Who made the eyes but I?'*

*'Truth, Lord, but I have marred them; let my shame  
Go where it doth deserve'.*

*'And know you not' says Love, 'who bore the blame?  
'My dear, then I will serve'.*

*'You must sit down', says Love, 'and taste my meat  
So I did sit and eat.*

# EDUCATION FOR THE WHOLE MAN

## From a Headmaster's Report

For many years now, there has been a scramble for places in the science curriculum. Almost every parent desired his son to become a doctor, an engineer or a scientist. Children particularly in the higher grades have been persuaded or urged to drop everything else and concentrate on science courses; and the rat race is on. Schools are spending much money on eye-catching and better equipped laboratories. Goaded by parental ambition and governmental thinking, educators have forgotten the other needs of children. They chose to admit the brighter pupils into the science classes, and then make them work towards excellent grades. The fact that true education is a preparation for living in a competitive society is often overlooked.

One does not at all object to the study of science. In fact, this is an age of science and the scientific attitude must become an intrinsic part of everyman's thinking. But the time has come when those responsible for school education must divert part of their resources towards the real development of the human personality. We should break through the single mould through which we have been trying to force our school-going children as though they were so much clay. Parents and educators must stop projecting their personal ambitions on their children. Instead they should provide them with a form of education based on the children's interest which could offer scope for diversified activities. What is really necessary is a revolution in the content of education. Schools must now provide better libraries and other facilities, including curricular time for activities to satisfy the individual tastes and talents of pupils. Music, the fine arts, games, gardening, photography, architectural design, workshop practice, public speaking, creative writing, bird watching, and outward bound expeditions to name a few, must be raised to the same status as traditional academic subjects and accorded no less priority. Parents too must accept that if a child pursues photography or reading in the library with greater enthusiasm than chemistry, he is not losing out on the educational plane. Such pursuits are not merely extra curri-

cular diversions (as generally regarded at present) but constitute a field of activity essential to the creative and outgoing impulses of the child.

It has been clearly observed that success even in a single school activity of his choice contributes to the child's happiness and self-respect which in turn leads to an improved performance all round. He has made his mark and found within the system a place of his own choosing: more reason, then, to widen the field of his choice. Why then, should not a teenager be allowed to get his school certificate in athletics, rock-climbing, photography, workshop practice or the study of birds and butterflies for that matter ?

Everybody knows or speaks about the incredible explosion of knowledge in the twentieth century. There is therefore also the need for a corresponding explosion in our curriculum and examination systems. With the body of knowledge growing in almost geometrical progression, nobody can possibly hope to assimilate even a sizeable fraction of it. So, why just go on overloading syllabi? Why not give the child more elbow room for his creative urges? Why not let him engage in activities born out of his natural interests and aptitudes? Surely, we should have no objection to children learning what they enjoy and enjoying what they learn? Or, have we ourselves lost out on the joys of living and learning and therefore perpetuating the idea of school as a seminary for stoics ?

Not all the children can be good at the same thing but it is important to remember that every child can be good at something. If he is good at something, he will somehow create a niche for himself in that sphere. What is more, he will grow up to be a happier man and make a better job of whatever he undertakes. The organisation of man in society is not static and pre-ordained but it is dynamic and human. Let us not therefore strive only to shape the child in our own image but let us, instead, accept him as an individual and as responsible and concerned adults cater for the development of his separate and varied talents. He will make his own tomorrow when it is time.



As we turn our thoughts to our land, in particular, where we find immense efforts are being made to provide more food for a growing population, there is a special need for the best young men and women with well trained minds, bodies and characters to become the leaders in the country. Agriculture is becoming increasingly scientific and modern methods now being applied to farming require to be carried out by alert brains and skilled hands. The tractor is too complicated a mechanism to be handled by clumsy people. Electrical equipment demands training and experience and despite the present critical situation, it is hoped, that it will not be long before the countryside has a plentiful supply of electricity. The organisation of food production and marketing, co-operative buying and selling call for knowledge of costing and accounting. In short, the development of agriculture requires the services of as good brains as any other profession or occupation. Let us remember that in this shifting, restless, unstable world, People who work and live in the countryside have the deepest cultural roots, far deeper than those which can be struck through the paving stones and the metalled streets of the city.

It is high time that we got away from the idea that there is or should be, some strict dividing line between the academic or practical or liberal and vocational education. If education is not vocational, if it does not fit a boy or girl for some vocation or some calling in life, it is futile. Education for Education's sake is like a puppy chasing its tail. Of course, an intensive and exclusive application to studies associated with vocational employment will assuredly deaden the intelligence, if it is far-removed from the humanities and literature and art and music. Similarly, a so-called liberal education will become sapless and anaemic unless it be leavened by an appreciation of the practical achievement of mankind in science and mechanics. There should never be any arbitrary distinction between the academic and technical or any other form of education. We learn in order to live, and in an age of science and machinery, boys or girls who are brought up solely on words and ink and are cultured only in the literary sense will lead limping lives.

Therefore our urgent plea today is for "all - rounders" in education. Why should not scientists write poetry or why should not engineers paint? Leonardo da Vinci was an engineer and Michael Angelo an architect. The craftsmanship of William Morris was not affected by his literary genius. Professors of classics should have some knowledge of chemistry and economists of conditions in the field and factory. Politicians including Cabinet Ministers would be none the worse if they understood the mechanism of gas engines.

All knowledge is relative and to know any one thing really well, we need to know a great deal about many others. We are, of course, aware of the old warning that a little learning is a dangerous thing, but it is only dangerous to those who do not know how little it is!

The aim of education should be to develop the whole man and the life of the student in every phase of education should reflect in miniature the working and playing of the world outside. The school with its diverse interests and opportunities for every kind of activity is a microcosm of the world and is a splendid preparation for life. This is our aim and we seek to achieve it as best as we can.

This is part of the Report submitted at the Prizegiving of St. Thomas' Prep. School, Kollupitiya, by the Headmaster, Mr. J. S. L. Fernando when the Chief Guest was the Minister for Education - The Hon. Ranil Wickremesinghe.

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#### LETTER FROM THE BISHOP OF KURUNAGALA

Bishop's House,  
Kurunegala.  
November 1981.

My dear Friends,

Our Diocesan Council passed all the Resolutions regarding further steps towards Church Union with the necessary majorities. I was so glad that all the laity present voted for them without exception. We must now go forward according to the opportunities available under the good hand of God.

Since I last wrote to you, the Sinhala-Tamil situation has been aggravated as you well know. The leaders of all religious groups have sent out a letter saying that such escalating tension was due to the spread of evil or demonic forces in our midst. People of all religions were asked to use methods of fasting and devotional spirituality that were available within their respective religious traditions, so that the forces of compassion, justice and reconciliation may be released to overcome the forces of evil. We are literally engaged in a spiritual warfare for the soul of our emerging nation. I hope you will join in unceasing prayer with fasting, so that we share in the tribulations that presage the manifesting of Christ's reign among us, and learn to discern where the spirit of evil is at work and how to combat and overcome the same.

I have resumed my engagements, visiting parishes in Nawalapitiya, Matale, Wattedgama, Gampola, Cathedral, Gatembe, Peradeniya University, Christ Church, Kandy and Kadugannawa. I also visited Madulkelle to hasten the initial work of our project among the Estate workers. There was also a visit to the Theological College of Lanka in Pilimalawa to take a quiet morning.

We had a group of visitors from India, Pakistan, Japan and New Zealand during a consultation that was held in Sri Lanka on 'Religions and Ethnic Issues'. Colonel Nicholas from South Asia Church Aid Association was also here on a visit, to discuss their plans to be of further assistance in London to the Church in the Indian Sub-continent.

During November (18th - 25th) there will be a Consultation organised by the World Council of Churches on 'Church Unity and the Renewal of Human Community' near Colombo. Your prayers would be much appreciated for this.

November is the month when we especially remember that great cloud of witnesses who surround and encourage us on our earthly pilgrimage, namely, the saints. As you know they have been described as those through whom the light of Christ shines. They are human signs through whom the radiance of the abiding divine Presence shines. They make the hidden but living

God transparent in our midst. We need more saints because they are the most effective communicators of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is they who enable others to look unto Jesus, as the author of human life reaching towards fulfilment. It was Irenaeus who said that "the glory of God is man fully alive."

As I write this Letter, news has reached me that Devar Surya Sena has passed away. To us in this Diocese, his musical setting to the Sinhala Liturgy will remain an indelible memorial to his creative genius. As we chant this haunting Liturgy ever so often, in village and town parish, embellished with the throb of the drums, the rhythm of the dancers, allied to the offering of flowers and lights (sabdha puja, natyya puja, mal puja, and pahan puja), we shall ever give thanks for a true son of the soil, a Christian gentleman and bridge builder between East and West. It was only the other day, that he spent time with us, trying to drill some musical sense into our clergy, when chanting this Liturgy! May he rest in peace.

Yours very sincerely,

+ Lakshman Wickremesinghe.

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## FOR CHRIST AND THE WORLD

(Summary of a talk by Mr. B. E. Fernando given at the Public Meeting of the Annual Sessions of the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya on the 22nd August 1981)

### REMNANT vs LEAVEN:

There are two attitudes adopted by Christians in their relationship to the world. The extremes are - The Old Testament concept of the 'Remnant' - pure and undefiled, in the midst of the world but separate; the New Testament concept of 'Leaven' - becomes effective by penetration, not separation. These are vividly portrayed in the two Biblical stories in St. Luke 10 vs 30-37; and Acts 3 vs 1-9. In the first, two religious leaders - a Priest

and a Levite were on their way to the Temple to pray when they were interrupted by a man who had been robbed, oppressed and exploited. They were good people but did not wish to be polluted just before the Temple service. They attended their Temple service but the wounded man continued to suffer where he was. In the 2nd story, two religious leaders, Peter and John, were also on their way to the Temple to pray when they were interrupted by a man who was incapacitated. They stopped, restored the man to full humanity and we are told that the man accompanied the two disciples to the Temple service. The Church membership increased thereby.

The preliminary statistics of the 1981 Census are out and the non-Roman Catholic Christian community in Sri Lanka is continuing to decrease. Is this because we are more concerned about the 'Remnant' principle than about the 'Leaven principle'?

People are both objects and subjects of sin. They sin and are also sinned against. Social service is what is done after a social problem arises. Social Action is what is done before a social problem can arise, to prevent one. Both are needed but so often we do only the first and that, too, haphazardly. Structures, including Church structures, are designed to keep things as they are, to keep people where they are. To progress we may need to change them.

### **Salt and Light**

Jesus says, quite emphatically, in Matthew 5 vs 13-16 - You, (and you alone) are Salt of the earth. Salt preserves the meat, is different from meat, adds flavour, creates thirst, and a little is sufficient for the whole Church. We are meant to be like that. Are we ?

You (and you alone) are the Light of the world. Light exposes darkness, shows the way to all, and a small Light is sufficient. We are meant to be like that. Are we ?

The 'You' in the English Bible often does not refer to an individual but to a congregation, a large group, but we take it as singular, not plural.

## All Blessed, not some :

We are often like these mushroom clubs that have sprung up all over the city, with the signboard "For Members Only". A former Archbishop, William Temple, said "The Church is the only society in the world which exists for the benefit of those who do not belong to it." Is this true of your Church? Our God is the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.

*God said to Abraham* — "In Thee shall **ALL** the families of the earth be blessed": Genesis 12 verse 3.

*God said to Isaac* — "In thy seed shall **ALL** the nations of the earth be blessed": Genesis 26 vs 4.

*God said to Jacob* — "In thee and in thy seed shall **ALL** the families of the earth be blessed. Genesis 28 vs. 14.

That is what God is telling the Christian Church today - You should be a blessing to everyone in Sri Lanka, not merely to your Church members.

**The Creation Commands:** God gave man Three Commands at creation :

- (1) Be fruitful & multiply. This we have done, even to an excess in our lands.
- (2) Have dominion over the earth - This we are doing very well, except that God did not want One Man to have dominion over other men in the way that it happens in the modern world.
- (3) Replenish the earth - This we **have not done** and so, almost too late, we are coining phrases like ecology and environmental pollution. Every act of God's creation was pronounced good in itself. So if we cut down

a tree and to not replace it, we are violating God's design. The energy crisis today is because we obtain our energy supplies from non-renewable sources; sources which cannot be replenished, like oil, gas and coal instead of from renewable, replenishable sources like the sun, wind and water. Disobedience to God's commands brings severe repercussions.

### **God's Economy - Always Surplus :**

The Church is usually like the world in transactions involving goods and materials. We fear that we will run short of money if we engage in Development Projects for other people. We argue, if we cannot look after our own needs how can we look after the needs of others? We are tempted always to start from a position of strength, rather than a position of weakness. Jesus never did that. It was absurd, said His disciples in the story of the Feeding of the 5000, even to attempt it. In the reckoning of men there is always a deficit, but in God's economy there is no such concept - it is always a Surplus. What was left over was more, much more than what they started with. God does not merely add, He multiplies. If we only give Him a chance He will show that "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof". We think of physical safety and material security but those are not the marks of the Christian.

C. T. Studd's motto was expressed beautifully, thus —  
"Some want to work within the sound of Church or Chapel bell,  
I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell"

### **World Vision's Work :**

We are now involved in over 350 very poor villages, mostly in the remote and inaccessible areas of our country. We have the experience now and the resources to continue this successfully on our own. But we feel that this is the task of the local church and so we are trying to motivate various Church leaders and congregations throughout the country to be involved in at least ONE Community/Rural Development Project. We are at your service

If you need our funds to start projects on a recycling basis, we are prepared to help. If you have other sources of revenue, we are prepared to share our expertise and experience. Unless the Church in Sri Lanka is prepared to take an active part in the integral development of our country (I do not mean our members only), we do not justify our existence.

God sent the Son into the World  
God sent the Holy Spirit into the World  
May God now send the Church into the world.

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### GLIMPSES OF LIFE BEYOND DEATH

*The Rev. Lynn De Silva*

*A Sermon preached on Easter Sunday 1981 at the Methodist Church Wellawatte, published at the request of many. A few additions have been made and references given. A more detailed booklet is in preparation.*

A great deal of studies have recently been done on what happens after death, and real advances have been made in charting the last few moments of earthly life. It has now become a department of study like Biology, Sociology, Geology, Theology etc. and is called Thanatology (Thanatos is the Greek word for death). Today it is even possible to do a doctorate in thanatology. These studies have been done mainly by men of science. In a recent survey the data were collected by 2,000 doctors and nurses in America and India. Dr. Karlis Osis who is on the staff of the American Society for Psychical Research, mailed a questionnaire to 5,000 physicians and 5,000 nurses and received 640 replies reporting a total of over 35,000 observations of dying patients. He was later joined in his research by Dr. Erlendur Haraldsson, an associate professor of psychology in the University of Iceland at Reykjavik. They conducted their researches not only in America, but also in India too, to see what effect cultural and religious belief had on death-bed visions. They have written a book **At the Hour of Death.**



A book that has had a very wide circulation, now in its 23rd printing is **Life After Life**, by Dr. Raymond A. Moody, an American with a background of philosophy, medicine and psychiatry. Another note-worthy book is **To Die is Gain**, by Dr. J. C. Hampe, a German whose book first appeared in German and was later translated into English. Both worked independently relying extensively on first-hand accounts which have striking similarities. Much more has been written. A bibliography of books and articles on this subject has been published listing 2500 titles.

The data consists of three categories of people:

- (a) of those dying and what they said just before they passed away;
- (b) of those who almost died - having a close brush with death and revived later;
- (c) of those who were pronounced clinically dead and revived after some time.

Since today it is becoming increasingly common to resuscitate patients from a state of clinical death, it is possible to question a growing number of people who have either had a close brush with death or have gone through the experience. A careful study of the data shows very striking similarities in their experiences. Let us look at five common features.

## II

Firstly, experience of being "out-of-the-body" and looking down on efforts to revive the patient. What is fascinating about these reports is that the patients describe accurately what was going on when doctors and nurses were making all efforts to resuscitate the almost dead body. Minute details have been described by patients, which have surprised doctors. Much has been said about the nature of this "body". Dr. Moody calls it the "spiritual body" and gives detailed accounts.

Secondly, experience of "being welcomed" into a life beyond by relatives and friends. A "take-away" person or persons, often immediate family members, appear to the dying person. One significant fact is that at the point of death always only the departed appear and not the living. In the case of children dying or who have undergone near-death experiences, we would expect them to call out for daddy and mummy who were living. But Dr. Elizabeth Kubler Ross, professor of psychiatry at the University of Chicago, who has studied this aspect says "not one of the children has ever said Mummy and Daddy unless their parents had predeceased them in death". Dr. Ross reports of an interesting case. A mature woman fell seriously ill and was in hospital. Her father was living at the time. But just before she passed away she saw her father welcoming her. The fact was that her father had died one hour before she died. She did not know this when she was conscious. This alleged experience is strikingly in line with the survey of deathbed visions undertaken by Sir William Barrett, professor at the Royal College of Science in Dublin in 1962. He recorded eight cases of people "seeing visions" of deceased relatives whose death had been kept secret from the dying witness. Here is one interesting case. Professor Barrett's wife, an obstetrician had delivered a baby to a dying mother. The dying mother, Lady Barrett reports, "suddenly.. looked eagerly towards one part of the room, a radiant smile illuminating her whole countenance, 'Ah, lovely, lovely', she said I asked, 'What is lovely?' 'What I see', she replied in low, intense tones.. Then — seeming to focus her attention more intently on one place for a moment — she exclaimed, almost with a kind of joyous cry, 'Why, it's Father! Oh he's so glad I'm coming; he is so glad'.. On looking at the same place again she said with a rather puzzled expression, 'He has Vida with him'".

Now, Vida was her sister who had died three weeks previously, but because of the serious condition of her health, the dying mother, Vida's sister, had not been told about this death. Actually it is this case that led Sir William Barrett to make investigations of similar cases.

Thirdly, appearance of 'a Being of Light,' a loving warm spirit. This being asks the departing one, questions, non-verbally, to make him evaluate his life and helps him along by showing him a panoramic, instantaneous pay back of major events of his life. The person is made to reflect on his own life. It is a sort of judgemental review of his life in the presence of the "Being of light." Who is this "Being of Light"? Some say Jesus, or Mary or one of the saints or angels, while Hindus say it is "Yama" the god of death or a Hindu diety. It is interesting that even atheists have spoken of a "Being of light". Whatever it is, the fact is that we are made to reflect on our own lives. We have to account for what we have done during our life time.

Fourthly, moving rapidly down a long dark tunnel or road followed by a profound calm and joy and passing into openness and light. Some have experienced a sense of approaching a border or frontier, apparently representing the limit between earthly life and the next life, and being sent back. They were annoyed and disappointed at having to return from such a pleasant experience. One patient said, "I tried not to come back but I had to return". Some describe frank transcendent experiences and have said that they will never fear death again because of the glorious experience they have had.

Fifthly, there are also reports of bad experiences, ones that are terrifying and impossible to face up to. These may be those who have a sense of guilt, whose sins are not forgiven. Such people, it has been observed, repress their feelings into the unconscious and lose their memory.

These then are the five evidential features:

1. Out of body experiences.
2. Being welcomed by loved ones etc.
3. Appearance of a "Being of light" in whose presence a judgemental review of one's life takes place.
4. Moving down a dark tunnel and passing into the open and light.
5. Bad or terrifying experiences that are repressed.

There are some who have been critical of these experiences and have tried to explain them away. They have put forward some theories. They say that they are due to wish-fulfilment, dreams, hallucinations or psychological stress.

It is admitted that hallucinations, delusions, dreams etc., can occur due to brain damage, brain disease, high fever or heavy medication affecting the patients brain processes or when the brain is starved of oxygen. Blood pressure in the ear, it is pointed out, evokes the experience of rising, hovering or floating in space which, could account for the 'out-of-body' experiences. But reports especially of the "clear-brained" at the time of death, has revealed striking facts.

1. The most impressive feature of death-bed accounts is their consistency. Dreams, hallucinations, religious experiences are never consistent. This is what Archbishop Richard Whately says: "When many coincide in their testimony (where no previous contact can have taken place) the probability resulting from this concurrence does not rest on the veracity of each considered separately, but on the improbability of such agreement taking place by chance. For the chances would be infinite against their all agreeing in the same falsehood". In other words, there is a remarkable concurrence or correlation between the experiences which cannot happen by chance; they are real. It is seen that men and women, young and old, educated and illiterate, religious and non-religious, Christian and Hindu, all had essentially the same type of experience. The similarities are striking.

2. Dreams, no matter how vivid, rapidly fade from consciousness on waking, whereas the glimpses of a future life are permanently remembered and treasured. Another important fact is that those who have survived have been able sharply and clearly to distinguish their glimpses of the life beyond from the various dreams and hallucinations they may have experienced during their illness. According to Dr. J. C. Hampe "a near-death experience cannot be confused with a dream because it possesses a closeness to reality which dreams can never attain.

In this experience, as it comes to the dying, it is not a question of ideas being lived as they are in a dream; on the contrary it is a life that is being thought and experienced. Above all, the consciousness of the self is completely different in kind from what it is when dreaming."

3. This experience has transformed the lives of people. They are radiant with joy and never afraid of death, and are absolutely convinced of the reality of life after death no matter what their previous views of death were. According to Dr. R. A. Moody "after this experience a person no longer entertains any doubts about his survival of bodily death. It is no longer an abstract possibility to him but a fact of his experience". Dr. Kubler Ross writes, "Not one of the patients who had this experience was ever afraid again to die. Not one of them in all the cases."

#### IV

The evidence we have considered goes against some religious beliefs. It contradicts the belief in the resurrection of the dead understood in a literal sense as "the uprising of the corpses." Some believe that the corpses will rise on the day of judgement until which time the dead will be in a state of sleep. This belief is not in line with the evidence. The evidence also contradicts the belief in reincarnation. We should remember that even Hindus who believe in reincarnation have had the kind of experience we have described.

The evidence however confirms basic Christian convictions:

1. It confirms that we continue to live after the permanent dissolution of the present body. That there is life after death is a common belief of people of all faiths although there are different views about this. Christians speak of this life after death in terms of resurrection. What continues after death is the spiritual body that God raised from death, "It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body."

2. It confirms that for the righteous death is a pleasant experience and the life beyond is a glorious and happy one; it is ineffable and inexpressible. St. Paul who had a glimpse into the future life says, 'I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven — whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into Paradise — whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows — and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter.' This gave St. Paul the confidence, which we also can share, to say, "O death, where is thy victory. O death where is thy sting. . . Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ".

3. Finally, the evidence confirms what Christians call the communion of saints. There are our loved ones to welcome us and there is the being of Light, whom we recognize as Jesus, to receive us. We enter into fellowship with all the Company of heaven. We could thus join with the writer of the letter to the Hebrews and say "Therefore since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race which is set before us; looking unto Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith."

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## WHAT ARE WE DOING FOR THE DYING AND THE BEREAVED ?

### Our Christian ministry

*The Rev. Shelton A. De Silva*

During the course of the year three of the most enriching experiences I have had have been in connection with death. Now I believe an area of very meaningful Christian witness is at the bedside of those terminally ill. In some instances it is a witness we can make to the patient himself. In others it is a witness we make to the loved ones. Living as we do in a multi-religious community

where attendance at funerals is a custom of our people, what we do at funerals becomes a source of witness and an evangelistic opportunity of the highest significance and also a means of grace to us.

About two and a half years ago when Dr. Leicester Jayawardene returned from Jamaica, some of us came to know that he was suffering from terminal cancer, and did not have long to live. When we went to see him Dr. Leicester hinted that as he had not much time left he wanted to use that time as best as he could.

About nine months ago he came to a Seminar on Pastoral Counselling we held in Mount Lavinia. He drove down in his little car and came alone. He was a little frailer than I had last seen him, but was his usual gay self and made his usual useful contributions as always. The day after the seminar I heard that he had entered the Intensive Care Unit of Ward 18 at the General Hospital, Colombo. About a week later I went to see him and was greeted with the usual warmth with which Leicester hailed his friends when they came to see him at home, and we talked about many things. I told him that when he came to the Seminar I had not suspected that he was ill. He replied that the best thing a person in his situation could do was to carry on with the normal routine of life. That was the only way one could take one's mind off one's illness. I asked him how he was sleeping. His biggest problem, he said, was sleep, as he could just not sleep as his body suffered from a great unease. But, he quickly changed the subject and showed me a book he was reading. It was a book by a recluse who had built a home for difficult and impossible people in the slums of some city. A home for people whom no one else would look after. He said, "Yoo know, Shelton, if ever I were to get out of this place alive this is one of the things I would like to do. A couple of us must rent a broken down house under the Kelaniya bridge and live there. We shall be robbed and beaten and abused but we must stick it out and continue to help all those who come to us for aid."

I had gone to cheer Leicester and to build him up and perhaps to take his mind off his illness for a few moments. When I left him it was he who had ministered to me and it was he who had made me think on the deepest issues of life. What is life for? How much security does a man need and how much money? Is there any insurance against suffering and woe? I think the honest rage of his mother at the impossibility of understanding how a God of love could allow a man like her son to suffer in this way drew Leicester and his family closer to God, and helped them and him to fight all self pity. It is better to give vent to our honest rage against God than to suppress all signs of rebellion against Him. In trying to help others to understand what was happening to him and in healing their wounds, Leicester had no time to think of his own wounds. We must thank God for the great courage and Christian witness of Dr. Leicester Jayawardene and the members of his family.

The next set of experiences arose out of funerals in homes where the parents and children were of different religious persuasions. The first was a home when the father was a practising Buddhist but the mother and children staunch Methodists. The funeral of the father was a Buddhist one according to his wishes and after the Buddhist clergy had come to the home and done their rites, I was asked whether I would say a few prayers. I could not see how I could refuse this request, but I made it clear that the funeral was a clearly Buddhist funeral and I would take no part in it. What I would do was to pray for the father and for the family and give them whatever strength and consolation was possible for the Church to give. Having sung a hymn, read the scriptures, and said some prayers, I felt moved to say a few words to this effect:

“I do not know personally the gentleman who has died but as we gather around his coffin such questions as where he is now and what will be his eternal destiny is bound to come into the minds of all of us. I would like therefore to share some thoughts with you.



When I was a student at the University, some of us had asked the late Dr. D. T. Nilles as to what happened to those good men who had never accepted the Christian faith. Dr. Nilles said, "We don't really know, but I think we may formulate an answer on these lines. I believe it is true that today most men through the churches and their leaders and especially through the mass media confront Jesus. But this confrontation is often distorted by the context in which it happens, by the credibility gap between the word of the preacher and the impression he gives of the things he stands for. For Mahatma Gandhi, for instance, Christianity appeared in the context of the British Raj in India and of missionaries who were partial to the British Raj. He could therefore personally admire Christ but rejected Christianity as presented by the Church because of its political overtones. This was the self-same problem that Rabindranath Tagore experienced. It was only his deep friendship with the saintly C. F. Andrews that helped him to realize that Christianity and the British Government and all it stood for were very different things. Perhaps after his death Gandhi would have met Jesus face to face and depending on the kind of person Gandhi was, he would find himself attracted to Jesus or offended by Him. 'Blessed is he that findeth no cause of offence in me' Matt. 11/6. Our Eternal destiny may be decided in the light of that confrontation".

I believe the words I said helped that Methodist family in their grief to think with HOPE of a father they loved and admired, but who never belonged to the household of faith.

The third experience was a fairly recent one. I had an uncle who married late in life and who married a village lady. For many years he had been employed in Colombo and had lived in the outskirts of Colombo, but when he retired at 55, he settled down in his wife's village nine miles away from Morawaka, in the Deniyaya District, miles away from nowhere.

About two years ago, my uncle was stricken with cancer of the tonsils and had to go to Maharagama Cancer Hospital occasionally for treatment. He recovered quite rapidly and had to come occasionally to Colombo for a monthly visit. On one occasion when he was apparently quite recovered I asked him, "Uncle, don't misunderstand the motives behind my question, but you are the only Christian in the village and if anything were to happen to you, what would you want done?" He took my hand in his and said, "Son, I am very glad you asked me this question, because I have been wanting to speak about this subject to you myself. You must do one thing for me. You must promise me a Christian burial. I agreed and asked him to ask his family to get in touch with me well ahead as communications with his village were difficult.

About February this year one Thursday evening a cousin suddenly arrived and told me that his father was sinking and would not last long. Could I come with him to his bedside? I told my cousin that I had a meeting on Saturday and services to take on Sunday, but by 12.30 p.m. on Sunday noon I should be free, and could go with him. Meanwhile, I sent a telegram to my eldest brother that my uncle was sinking and would like him to join me as I was leaving on Sunday noon.

My brother received the telegram and came down and by the time we had lunch and left for Morawaka it was 2 p.m. We arrived at Nelluwe, a village nine miles off Morawaka at 7.30 p.m. and got hold of a torch and some candles and coconut shells and had a very steep climb of three miles up a very round road to the Sinharaja forest. We had to go down again, down a path and over an "Edanda" that is, a very primitive bridge made of a single coconut tree, which we crossed in the darkness and the wet and the drizzle. It was quite cold and we arrived at my uncle's little house at about 9.30 p.m. in the night. I had expected to see my uncle dying in bed, but no sooner than he heard that we had come he got so excited about our arrival that he jumped out of bed and came out to meet us!

By next morning my uncle who had been very ill a few days before had recovered enough to ask us to sing some favourite hymns of his. "Sometimes a light surprises", "O God, our help in ages past", "Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear", "What a friend we have in Jesus". Despite his cancer of the throat my uncle to joined us in singing with tears running down his cheeks. We prayed for him and his family. We came back after lunch the next day and the family were delighted with the results of our visit.

About two months after this I suddenly got a telegram on a Tuesday to say that my uncle had passed away. I tried one again to get in touch with my brother but failed to do so. My cousin came home in a car at 12.30 a.m. and we travelled through the night and arrived at Nelluwa at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday morning. We were among the first to arrive at that remote village. My cousin told me that it would be a Christian funeral with no Buddhist rites whatsoever, although my aunt and my cousins were Buddhists and the funeral was entirely in my hands.

On Wednesday afternoon a grave was dug but it rained so hard that evening that the river rose and swamped the grave. Usually the funerals in the village were cremations, but my cousins may have thought that there was something against cremation in the Christian religion and arranged for a burial.

Meanwhile I was wondering what to do. As I was the only Christian in the village I found it a little unnerving. I had taken my Sinhala prayer book and could go through the funeral service in Sinhala, but what would they make out of the unusual metaphors that we used. "We know that if the earthly tabernacle of this body is destroyed we have a building not made with hands in the heavens". The more I thought about tabernacles and houses not made with hands the more unhappy I was. To my great relief and joy, two hours before the funeral three of my Christian cousins come from Matara. I told them the situation and told them that I felt it would not do to go through with the burial service mechanically. Some explanation about the Christian attitudes to the after life was called for and as my Sinhala would

not be equal to all this I would speak in English and one of them who was a trained teacher would translate sentence by sentence. They agreed.

We commenced the funeral service in Sinhala. "I am the Resurrection and the Life" etc. I told them that when I was last here my uncle got me to sing some favourite hymns of his in English and so we four cousins sang a verse of "What a Friend we have in Jesus". My cousin then read the passages of Scripture and I said a prayer. We then sang another verse of one of uncle's favourite hymns: "Nearer my God to Thee", and I said a few words which were translated. "This was the first Christian funeral in this village" I said, "and I think I owe you an explanation as to why I, a Christian Minister, am here and what we are about to do. About a yera ago my uncle made me promise that I would give him a Christian burial and my presence here this evening is in fulfilment of a promise I made him. Now why do you think my uncle wanted a Christian burial? I shall tell you."

"About two thousand years ago there lived a in Palestine a man named Jesus. He was a most unusual kind of person. He was a Jew who believed in the law of Moses, but he insisted that Moses ought to be interpreted in a more meaningful way than the people had done up to that day. Moses had said that the Sabbath was Holy and so it was, but surely if God upholds this world even on the Sabbath as an act of mercy, then God's children could carry on their works of mercy even on the Sabbath Day. "For the Sabbath was made for man - not man for the Sabbath!" In those days the respectable good people did not mix with sinners and the Romans employed tax gatherers, but Jesus spent the greater part of His time with them. He said they needed him more than the respectable did. At this time a religious teacher would not talk even to his sister in a public place as it was thought to be unseemly, but Jesus had a great many women serving Him as his disciples, and some of them were like Mary of Magdala and the woman of Samaria, who before they had met Jesus had been women of easy virtue. Jesus further, was critical of how the

High Priests exploited the Temple for their own gain. The Temple tax could be paid only in the old coinage of the Jewish kings and these coins were rare and the exchange rate was very high. Jesus accused the High Priests of making God's House a den of robbers. Well, to cut a long story short, the High Priests and Jewish leaders got Jesus crucified and buried, and that seemed to be the end of the story. But when on the day after the Sabbath, the women went to visit the grave, they found Jesus' body missing from the tomb. At first they thought it had been stolen but that same day Jesus met them and spoke to them and they were convinced beyond all reasonable doubt that God had raised Him from the dead. Now, this meant two things: firstly, they were Jews who believed in one God, but if Jesus was risen he was more than a mere man, and was of the nature of God. This was a terrible thing for a Jew to admit, but admit it they did. Secondly, if Jesus was raised from the dead, He had defeated death, and all who believed in Jesus too could overcome death through Him. **We Christians believe that when we die, those of us who truly abide in Jesus now in spirit in this life will continue to abide in Him after death and we shall be with Him and with all our loved ones who abide in Him.** This is why my uncle wanted a Christian burial because he wanted to proclaim to God and man that he believed in the Resurrection of the dead and daimed Jesus promise that where he had gone his loved ones would be also.

We sang another verse of one of my uncle's favourite hymns and I said a prayer and we ended the service. A few minutes after at the graveside we committed the body to the ground. After the grave was closed, my cousin, on behalf of the family, thanked the entire village for their co-operation in giving my uncle a Christian burial.

On reflecting on what had happened, the following truths emerge. Had I one day decided to preach in a Buddhist village, on my own I may have had the Buddhist clergy opposing me. But how could they refuse the last request of a dying man? My uncle had provided me an opportunity to affirm the great Christian truths of

the Resurrection of Jesus His life and example in the village had led them to respect his religious convictions and despite his isolation from the community of faith he had clung desperately to the Lord he believed in. Had I gone through the prayer book, the concepts and ideas would have merely puzzled them. I had therefore to preach Christ and Him crucified and raised up and leave it to Jesus to draw all men to Him. Whatever the problem we face, if we wait upon God, He will provide a way, as He did when He sent my cousin to the funeral to support me by his presence there. We do not know what the harvest will be or whether there will be a harvest at all, or when it will be. All we are asked to do is to preach Christ in season and out of season and to leave it to the great Sower to provide the right soil and the harvest.

All men die. We give Glory to God that some can die with courage and in the Christian Hope of the Resurrection amidst the most painful and difficult circumstances. We do not know with whom the mansions in our Father's House will be peopled, but perhaps when our loved ones see Jesus face to face, they may accept Him and He them. The foundation of the Christian Religion is the Resurrection of Jesus and "how will they hear except they have a preacher?"

Only Christians who have risen from the dead in Baptism, in confirmation, in Holy Communion, in a conversion experience that leads to a Life of daily obediences, can preach the Gospel of the Resurrection. For they would have experienced the Risen Life in faith and Love, in Joy and peace. The beginning of the Resurrection is here and now and the Church fails when it does not produce the fruits of the Risen Life and reveal its powers now in the Life of its members and in the structures of the Church. for what we communicate to others will in great measure depend on what we are.

## COUNTRY CHURCHYARDS AS CENTRES FOR RURAL SERVICE

by Alfreda De Silva

Country churchyards in this land have been much more than tranquil settings from which to hear the bells toll at the close of day. Through the years, they have been places that generated education and ethical and vocational guidance for the people of the areas in which they were situated.

I can think of five such churches, in particular — those of Kotte, Nugegoda, Talangama, Mampe and Liyanwela, before some of these places were urbanised.

At one time all of these belonging to the diocese of Colombo were in charge of that dedicated and famous Anglican missionary, the Rev Richard Thomas Dowbiggin, who lived and worked in this island from 1869 to 1898, with his equally dedicated wife, Anna Letitia Dowbiggin.

The well-known and highly respected C.M.S. Girls' School of Kotte, now the Jayewardenapura Balika Maha Vidyalaya, was founded by the Dowbiggins in 1871 along with its parallel school for boys.

It is noteworthy that in that faraway time these institutions had been started as bilingual ones, giving equal importance to both English and the language of the country.

The Dowbiggins taught by the contagion of their wonderful example and their strong Christian faith, and loved and cared for the people in the areas where they worked.

My grandmother, Rachel Wijesinghe, had been a pupil and protegee of the Dowbiggins at the CMS School in Kotte. In late years she was often called upon to preside at parish school prize — givings in and around Nugegoda where she lived.

And that's how I came to know the country church known as the Church of St. Paul in Liyanwela, to which I was introduced when I was about five.

My grandmother had taken me along to the prize-giving at the Liyanwela school. She was met with flowers and greetings and taken up on the platform. I was tactfully led to a seat in the front row of the hall. Terrified at being parted from grandma I darted on to the stage tugging at her skirts. But seeing that hall full of highly amused faces all I could do was burst into unceremonious tears.

The situation was saved by some kind 'aunt' who led me to the Liyanwela church yard where we stayed till it was time for cakes and tea.

The Church of St. Paul, Liyanwela built in 1874 during the Dowbiggin era was a centre of much activity in those early years and its school continued to thrive.

Indeed the Dowbiggins were so much at home in Liyanwela that Mrs. Dowbiggin came to live there in 1911 just after her husband's death and stayed on till she died in 1930.

The parishioners at Liyanwela, we are told, were an enthusiastic group of people who walked over dirt tracks and paddy fields, slime and slush to hear the Rev. Dowbiggin preach in their church.

So great was their dedication, that when the church fell into disrepair the church committee got down to the job of repairing it, clad in costumes that would make today's city church-goers stand and stare and even laugh. Although the labour was technically unskilled the result of their work had been commendable.

Recently, the Church of Ceylon Board of Women's Work hit upon the splendid idea of using the large church garden at Liyanwela for a Training Centre for women and school drop-outs.



Now the grounds of the Liyanwela church are buzzing with new activity. 'Suhada Seva' as the Training Centre is called trains women and girls in various income - generating activities like handicrafts and poultry farming. Soon they will be taught bee-keeping .

The sewing classes remind old residents of Liyanwela of the 'Dorcas classes of Mrs. Dowbiggin' day when women of the village gathered in her home for tea and conversations and to learn fine embroidery which had a ready sale among the European population here.

Health and nutrition education are high on the list of priorities at the Centre, which has a Triposha feeding project for a hundred and twenty five children in the village. These children also have the opportunity to learn through creative play at the Centre.

The Department of Agriculture provides free classes in the construction of low-cost smokeless kitchens and sand-bath ovens and the making of compost and fertilizer for growing fruit, flowers and vegetables. The local Red Cross gives instruction in first-aid and nursing. The cooperation of the head man and the community, is freely given in support of the project.

The Church of Ceylon Board of Women's work has sown the seed of an idea that might well germinate in other country church-yards of Sri Lanka — the exploiting of unused land for the development of rural communities throughout the island.

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## SURVIVAL WITH IDENTITY

by

G. I. O. M. Kurukulasuriya

*Sri Lanka has a price on its head, a hundred satellites are above and below! But we who believe that God works in history, say that our island will never become a battle field. Nevertheless, grace builds up on Nature ....*

We in this little island are an ancient settlement that has survived—with identity. Our main task is to keep it that way.

The old Ravana Kingdom has had a continuous stream of newcomers as exiles (Vijaya) pirates, merchants, monks and sages, travellers, slaves, captives, mercenary soldiers, skilled craftsmen, indentured labour, invaders and illicit immigrants. The expansion of Europe had its toll. The expanding world economy now broods over us. We were involved in other peoples wars—two world wars and the Boer War. But, we survived—with identity. From antiquity we have a city, Anuradhapura, alive again, which was a capital City for over a thousand years, with Ruwanweliseya as a symbol. Few great cities of today have a prospect for such survival with identity.

But the world has changed. The word War has a totally different meaning today, but mankind has not realised it. Today the world is preparing for a war that cannot be fought. Little Sri Lanka can be no party to it. There will be no victor. The only objective will be survival!

The latest UN warning of a possible atomic holocaust points out that there are about Forty Thousand Nuclear Warheads in the world today with a total explosive strength of one million Hiroshima bombs, (Daily News, 8th July.) It is the equivalent of more than three tonnes of T.N.T. for every human being ! About two hundred is enough to wipe out the dominant civilization of our time. We also know from the Report of SIPRI, the Scandinavian organisation studying the arms race, that the Armament Bill for 1980 was estimated at US Five Hundred Billion for a world population of about Four and a half billion people. The Third World too is being drawn into this mania.

Between atomic war and the international disease of Terrorism there is the conventional war, There was the Vietnam war fought on Asian territory. The USA is to put up a memorial for the 57,692 Americans who died in this seven year war which involved

three million Americans. Besides the dead a considerable number suffered from the psychological effects ("post Vietnam syndrome") and the effects of "Agent Orange." The herbicide agent orange (of which forty four million pounds were used as a defoliant in Vietnam) hurt both the users and the enemy. Nobody has counted the Vietnamese dead or victims of agent orange. That is the price conventional of war in our times. Not for us and not on our territory.

Sri Lanka, a mountain peak of the fabled continent of Lemuria is on the highway of international trade. After the combined fleets of India and the Arab merchants were defeated at the close of the fifteenth century the Portuguese arrived and had Socotra, Goa and Malacca as their staging points. The British subsequently had Aden, Trincomalee and Singapore. Today near us is Diego Gracia - too small a place to be effective. Sri Lanka has a price on its head. The eyes of the CIA and the KGB are upon us. The Indian Ocean is not a Peace Zone. Over a hundred satellite devices and many nuclear submarines are above and below. But, we who believe that God works in history pray that this island will never become a battle ground. Nevertheless, grace builds upon nature. It is up to the people of this country to use their wisdom and prudence to use Trade and Diplomacy not to be caught like a nut in a nut - cracker! The first necessity for this is to be self sufficient in starch foods. And with our conviction pray now—that we may live later!

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## SCIENCE AND SOCIETY: TRENDS AND IMPLICATIONS

'Science and Society: Trends and Implications' was the theme of a four day national Seminar organised by the Ecumenical Christian Centre, Whitefield, Bangalore in October 1981.

The 40 participants, consisting of senior scientists, junior scientists, sociologists and political activists investigated the potential of Science and Technology for socio-political and cultural transformation of Indian Society and tried to understand the role of the scientific community in the transformation.

The focus of the Seminar was on the emerging trends in (i) The Electronics Revolution, (ii) Genetic Technology and (iii) The philosophy of Science and Ethical issues related to Science and Technology.

The Key-note address delivered by Dr. A. K. N. Reddy, Dean, Science Faculty, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore on 'The Shaping of Science and Technology in Developing Countries' set the tone for the debate on the kind of alternate Science and technology (indigenous science and technology) that is required within the context of radical transformation of Society. The other talks at the Seminar and the discussions that followed pursued this line of thought. The talks were on 'Ethical and Philosophical Questions, in Science and Technology' 'New Trends in the philosophy of Science', 'Issues in Development of Technology and R and D', 'The Electronics Revolution', 'Issues in Industrial Electronics' 'Information Revolution' and 'Implications of Innovations in Genetics'.

Three important debates emerged at the Seminar. The first is related to the characterisation of science i. e. on whether science is universal or culture specific. The universalist view of science implies that science is objective, neutral, value free and therefore universal. The culture specific view, on the other hand, refutes this view on the grounds that science even at the cognitive level has inherent in it the values shaped by a class society or national origins or by male dominated value systems.

The second debate that emerged was centered on the mobilisation of the scientific community i. e. on the professional and social commitment of scientists. It included discussion on the progressive role of scientists within institutional structures or the role of political groups, patriotic people's science movement and popular science movements outside formal structures.

The third major unresolved question in the Seminar which cuts through all the other issues was on whether and to what extent is a debate on philosophical and ethical issues going on

within the scientific community, within progressive scientific groups (eg. P.P.S.T. and P.S.M. etc.) and within left political groups. The need for philosophical and ethical debates was keenly felt as important for evolving an alternate science, that is necessary for the task of building a more just and participatory society in India.

The Seminar ended with a heightened awareness of the complexity of the relationship between science and society. However, new insights emerged and suggestions for further thinking were raised. A detailed report of the controversies raised in the Seminar is under preparation. These debates are intended to stimulate further exploration by individuals and groups so as to pave the way for dialogue between professional scientists, social scientists and activists in India.

Press Release: Ecumenical Christian Centre, Whitefield, Bangalore - 560 066

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### **AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL A CONSPIRACY OF HOPE**

Amnesty International was launched in 1961 to bring out of the dungeons the forgotten prisoners. It began with a newspaper article calling on people of all walks of life to begin working impartially and peacefully for the release of men and women imprisoned throughout the world for their beliefs. These were to be called "prisoners of conscience", and with that a new phrase entered the vocabulary of world affairs.

Within a month of that first appeal, scores of people from various countries came forward with offers of help. What started as a brief publicity effort was soon to be transformed into a permanent international movement.

In each case where the free expression of views was being suppressed by torture and imprisonment, Amnesty International members (slowly being organized into groups) attempted the seemingly

impossible. They began their own battle against official silence and political persecution. They contacted the prisoners families and lawyers and began sending off postcards, letters and telegrams appealing to government authorities to respect human rights.

### **Vocal critics**

As the movement became better known and attracted more support, its critics became vocal. A report on allegations of ill-treatment of detainees in Northern Ireland caused a furore in the United Kingdom, the country where the Amnesty appeal had first appeared. As other reports came out on country after country, denunciations followed. The Soviet journal *Izvestia* referred to "ideological saboteurs". *Rastakhiz* in Iran dubbed Amnesty "a new puppet show that the communists have started"

But from inside the very countries that were damning Amnesty came other voices. The postcards and the telegrams and the little parcels of medicine were getting through. Letters came back, many of them smuggled out of prison or past airport censors. "We have been able to face our problems with great determination as a result of encouragement from people like you", wrote Winnie Mandela, one of the best-known leaders of Black opinion in South Africa. "We know that we are not alone in our life-long battle. We owe this feeling to you."

### **Mounting evidence**

From the labour camps, from the torture cells, from the families and lawyers came new accounts of torture, of psychiatric abuse, of secret executions.

Faced with mounting evidence of the atrocities being inflicted on prisoners, an epidemic that seemed to spread like a cancer in the seventies, Amnesty International launched a global campaign for the abolition of torture.

Wherever prisoners were being subjected to torture—there were dozens of nations where the practice had become systematic,

leading to mutilation and death in detention—Amnesty International would intervene. A new network was set up, using telephones, post office boxes, telegrams and telex machines to cross-check reports of arrests and alert volunteers if torture was a possibility. Once a report was checked, hundreds of appeals could be on their way within hours. It became a life saving operation.

Among the many victims was a teacher. While he was being tortured by the police they opened a telephone line between the torture chamber and the prisoner's home, forcing his wife to listen to her husband's screams. During that ordeal she died of a heart attack. The prisoner himself survived and was eventually allowed to go into exile with his children. He told us, "They killed my wife. They would have killed me too; but you intervened and saved my life."

Another voice from prison. "Faith in your efforts and concern sustained me throughout the horrible period of my imprisonment. Without hope I think I would have died."

The movement had become a lifeline - a conspiracy of hope," open to every one prepared to work in defence of human dignity. It had proved that ordinary people could work together regardless of politics in an effort to halt the excesses of tyranny.

Today, Amnesty International has supporters and groups in more than 130 countries throughout the world. It has remained independent of any government, political grouping, ideology, economic interest or religious creed.

In less than 20 years, Amnesty International groups have intervened on behalf of more than 20,000 known or possible prisoners of conscience in over a hundred countries, with governments across the political spectrum.

But we are under no illusion about the challenge we face. Countless prisoners remain. Torture remains, Executions are reported daily. Now human rights run the risk of being dragged down in the tangle of international power - politics.

Enormous work will be needed to reach the point where world public opinion can finally put an end to the nightmare of arbitrary arrests, torture and killing.

Success depends on the support of volunteers ready to write letters, send telegrams, organize meetings and join in the effort. You can help immediately by sharing these pages with others and sending a donation to keep the work going.

### **Our mandate**

- *Secure the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of conscience.*
- *Ensure fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners.*
- *Abolish torture and executions.*

### **Our campaign**

- *You can find out more about Amnesty International, including addresses of our local groups and sections, by writing to The Sri Lanka Section of Amnesty International at 79/15, C. W. W. Kannangara Mawatha, Colombo -7.*
- *You can send a donation payable to Amnesty International. We rely on individual donations to remain free from interference by governments, funding agencies or pressure groups.*



## ON BOOKS

### — REVIEWS —

**SELF-RELIANCE: A strategy for development**, edited by Johan Galtung, Peter O'Brien and Roy Preiswerk, *Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications Ltd., London.* 1980. 422 pp.

**HELPING OURSELVES: Local solutions to global problems**, by Bruce Stokes. *Worldwatch Institute Book.* W. W. Norton and Company, New York and London, 1981. 160 pp.

"SELF-RELIANCE" is a collection of papers produced by the Institute for Development Studies, Geneva and based on the findings of civil servants, students, professors and technical assistants from the IDS and UNCTAD who met in 1975 and 1976 discuss alternatives to the present development strategies and forms of international co-operation. The intention of this book is to provide guidelines for people interested in development issues but not to provide ready-made answers. "The essays in this volume are unfinished — they are merely progress reports."

(p. 5).

"In debates about international development strategies seem to be more intense in the seventies than ever before such widely used concepts (closing the gap. GNP) are regarded with increasing scepticism, while others (satisfaction of basic with eco-development, self-reliance) are coming to the fore. The reason for this", writes Roy Preiswerk in the Introduction. "is the dissatisfaction with roughly 30 years of internationally concentrated efforts to reduce hunger, disease, unemployment and other as owing of poverty. Today, there is more poverty in the world than 30 years ago in the sense of more poor people as well as increasingly poor people and it is likely that this trend will continue if present "development" strategies prevail.

Could "self-reliance" become the new word for "development" making it possible for local, national or regional communities to use more resources for themselves, to assert their own value sys-

tems, to have confidence in their own ingenuity — in other words, to be less dependent on international organizations, foreign governments or giant corporations when trying to attain a better life? Seeing the forces at work, this seems like a utopia. But after all, self-reliance is the basic principle of a number of social systems under which approximately one quarter of the world's population lives. For quite a few others, the "utopia" may fairly soon become the dominant ideology and ultimately a way of life" (p. 11).

The book is divided into four sections. The first deals with concepts and ideologies, with a basic conceptual paper by Johan Galtung which served as a guideline for subsequent debates within the group. This is followed by two papers dealing with some philosophical sources to which the idea of self-reliance can be traced (Gandhi, Rousseau and Mao Tse-Tung). The next four papers in this section attempt to situate the concept of self-reliance in relation to other concepts or ideologies which have something in common with self-reliance. In Section II five essential dimensions of development are dealt with : food, energy, health, education and technology, Part III contains a series of case studies : Paraguay and the South Pacific, Africa (Tanzania and Madagascar), Iran and Niger. The final section deals with the feasibility of self reliance. The annex reproduces a number of recent documents on self-reliance.

Another approach to the same subject, but in a different, more community-gearred context, is "HELPING OURSELVES" by Bruce Stokes, a researcher with the Worldwatch Institute in Washington, D.C. "In any society, power gravitates to those who solve problems" writes Stokes. "As citizens become more involved in activities ranging from the improvement of health care to the management of industry, they can begin to take some of that power back into their own hands, No longer powerless, they can begin to create truly democratic societies."

Many of the issues that will dominate public concern in the eighties - energy, food, health-care, housing, population, industrial productivity, and the quality of work life — will only be solved through human action and inter-action within communities.

Although these problems are global in scope, their solution often lies at the local level — where their consequences are most obvious, the motivation to solve them is most direct, and the benefits of action are most immediate”.

*Helping Ourselves* highlights studies in both the United States and Western Europe which demonstrate that worker participation on the shop floor, in the boardroom, and in ownership can significantly increase productivity while improving the quality of work life. As regards energy, citizens can begin to conserve energy and to use solar power to reduce their vulnerability to oil price rises and fuel shortages. Self-help housing and multi-family homesteading is a way of combatting “the tightening supply, rising cost, and deteriorating quality of much of the world’s housing stock”. “A buffer against inflation and malnutrition” is for people themselves to grow at least some of the food they require while changes in diet and preventive health measures can “do more to improve people’s health than greater investments in hospitals and sophisticated medical technology”.

In the last chapter summarizing the book as a whole Stokes asserts that “some of (humanity’s) most pressing problems (can be solved) through local self-help efforts”. What is needed is a new set of values, doing away with dependency; values which “assert the dignity and worth of individuals and their social institutions’ These “community-based value systems must protect” “individual rights, while being flexible enough to reflect emerging social concerns.”

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## WORLD CHURCH NEWS

### THE C. C. A. ASSEMBLY

The Assembly is over, The CCA it would appear, has survived the Assembly.

But has the CCA been strengthened by the Assembly? Has the Seventh Assembly of the CCA made any real impact on the work and witness of the CCA in terms of new leadership, renewed commitment and heightened vision?

That's not an easy question to answer. Perhaps it's not even a fair question to ask.

The most important aspect of any ecumenical gathering is that it is an ecumenical gathering, a meeting of people in the name of Jesus Christ. That meeting happens, and because it happens the ecumenical vision is kept alive. But that meeting cannot be captured in features and reports.

So we must confine ourselves to the things that were seen and heard. As we do so we depend heavily on the four issues of *Assembly News*. Many of the items included here are reproduced from those four issues; a few are taken from other sources.

T.K.T

## NILES MEMORIAL LECTURES

We were to have four lectures. We had only two. Both dealt with the theme of *Living in Christ with People* in imaginative and challenging ways. They were excellent presentations but there was no time to discuss them, and that was a great pity.

### Christians must choose

"My own conviction is that the Church must opt for the ideology, programme and strategy covered by the term *indigenous Marxist Socialism*", declared Bishop Lakshman Wickremesinghe of Sri Lanka in the Niles Memorial Lecture.

He said this while discussing the choice which we face in Asia between the two ideologies of Welfare Capitalism and Socialism. He rejected the first because it has been shown "incapable of preventing the concentration of profit, power and privilege in dominant groups". The second by itself, in its present absolute forms, cannot cure our ills. The socialism which the Bishop commends is indigenous — a key word in this section of the paper — and must give "concrete priority to the image of Jesus as prophetic contestant and martyr". That term arose from his discussion of the three images of Christ as friend of sinners and outcasts, as prophetic contestant and martyr building a righteous human order, and as self-sacrificing Satyagrahi or truth-seeker.

The Bishop could not be present at the Assembly, and his lecture was read by Dr. Preman Niles of the CCA staff.

The lecture was in two parts. In the first the Bishop dealt with the theme of *living in Christ* in terms of the images and symbols in the Bible depicting various aspects of Christ. In the second he dealt with *people* from three angles: people in the multitude, people in the sense of nations with religious and cultural traditions other than Judaeo-Christian; and people in the sense of the community of baptised disciples of Christ.

The Bishop used the story of Markandeya in *Matsya Purana*, a Hindu sacred book, to illustrate the present Christian (and human) situation in Asian countries. From the false security of the colonial era, Asian peoples emerged, like Markandeya, into the confusion of the post-colonial deluge. They could no longer be the same again. They had to come to terms with the chaos and the confusion.

The paper was long and in parts difficult, partly because it drew so much upon the religious and cultural milieu of the Indian sub-continent. But that also was the measure of its authenticity.

It was clear that the Bishop had concrete ideas about the role of the Church and the CCA and the directions they should take. For example they need to give "genuine support, including sometimes critical support, to those action groups which work at the grassroots level, to enable radical changes in social institutions and psychological attitudes among people in society who suffer oppression and alienation".

But will the churches give such support? Will the CCA?

### The Power of Tears

'A work of art' — that was how one of the delegates described Dr. S.C. Song's Niles Memorial Lecture. One leading Asian theologian commented that the lecture represented "a

unique way of doing theology", a theology from the guts. "By fusing the human perspective with the Biblical perspective Dr. Song has illuminated the Asian predicament," he said.

"How can a strategy of suffering provide a blueprint for action?" — asked a friend involved in urban-rural mission. He has a point, but C.S. Song may counter that he is not attempting to provide a blue-print for action. He is only trying to bring out the tears in things and to sound the call for compassion from which all action must proceed.

How did Dr. Song sound that call?

As his overall framework he drew upon a Chinese folk-tale called "The Faithful Lady Meng". Her tears caused the Great Wall of China to collapse. The intensity and integrity of her suffering gave her the strength to speak out for justice and truth, and to denounce the wickedness of the emperor. The depth of her commitment enabled her to sacrifice her own life. And when, at the Emperor's orders, her body was cut into small pieces, they "changed into little silver fish in which the soul of Meng Chiang lives for ever".

It is a story of suffering and sacrifice, and of resurrection and life. The symbolism is both profound and compelling.

Folk-tales have no individual authors. They have emerged out of the shared experience of the community. Handed down by oral tradition from generation to generation, they represent the people's understanding of reality. They rise out of the primal perceptions and the basic experiences of people and as such, they are a vast reservoir of theological insights.

It is this largely untapped source which Dr. Song draws upon in his lecture. It is in the tears of people, and in the tears of Jesus and the Buddha, that he sees the 'possibility of a power ethic and of a political theology whose source is "the people, humiliated, oppressed and impoverished". "And the power of

our political ethic comes from the tears of people", he said, "People capable of crying, people capable of being moved to weep --- this is the source and power of our political theology."

Armed thus, the people will have the power to confront the savage god of national security. Of this insidious god, Dr. Song said:

"In the name of national security political opposition is condemned and brutally suppressed. No-one can offend this god and get away free. The taboo surrounding this idol is hard to break. Democratic movements, movements of the people are most offensive to the cult of national security. They upset internal stability and court the danger of invasion by external enemies. That is why we have seen this god of national security raging in great fury in many Asian capitals in recent years. Charges are fabricated against political dissidents. False confessions are extracted from human rights fighters by torture. The military court is then duly summoned to pronounce the predetermined verdict on the victims. These martial law court trials are ritual murders committed on the altar of national security the supreme god."

Our national histories, Dr. Song concluded, are not the histories of kings and presidents. "What makes history history are the people in whom the soul of Lady Meng lives — people humiliated and exploited but awakened to challenge the power of death with the power of resurrection. People make history worth experimenting with and worth living. There is no failure in the history created by people. People's history never fails. What we read about and see is the failure of the history of kings, emperors and dictators. But the people bear their history in pain. They carry it forward in suffering, and they create it in anticipation of its fulfilment, Is this not the history of the cross?"

## ELECTIONS

### The Presidium

The Christian Conference of Asia has elected four new Presidents to serve for the coming quadrennium. Elected were the Rev. Canon Alan Chan, an Anglican from Hong Kong, Miss Prasanna Kumari of the Church of South India, Mr. Victor Oorjitham, a Methodist layman from Malaysia, and Mrs. Jan Cormack, a Presbyterian lay woman from New Zealand.

The four were elected without debate and will serve till the eighth Assembly scheduled for 1985. Mr. Moon Kyu Kang from Korea was elected Honorary Treasurer.

The Rev. Canon *Alan Chan* is Lecturer in Pastoral Theology at Chung Chi Theological College of the Chinese University in Hong Kong, and part-time parish minister amongst the poor fishermen of Shatin, in the Hong Kong New Territories. He is a member of the WCC Central Committee and is married, with two daughters. Canon Chan writes a weekly column in the HK 'Christian Weekly' and several secular papers.

Ms. *T. Prasanna Kumari*, 23, is from Shoranur, Kerala, South India. She is a member of the Church of South India and has been involved in youth work in her parish. She recently completed a course in education, and hopes to teach in a church school.

Mr. *Victor Oorjitham*, a Methodist layman from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, is a practising lawyer and has been involved in Urban Rural Mission in Malaysia. During the past four years, he has been Moderator of the CCA-URM Advisory Committee.

Mrs. *Jan Cormack*, a Presbyterian lay woman from Christchurch, New Zealand, is an 'intermediate school teacher and member of the Executive Committee of the National Council of



Churches in NZ. She became involved in CCA activities as a member of the organizing committee of the Penang Women's Forum. She has been a member of the Executive of the CCA for the past four years. Jan is married, with three daughters.

### **The General Secretary**

The Rev. Dr. Yap Kim Hao was re-elected as CCA General Secretary for a further term of four years.

Should the election of the General Secretary continue to be the responsibility of the Assembly? The question was debated. Delegates were reluctant to give up the privilege. One proposal was that two names should be submitted to the Assembly, and they will, as on the day of reckoning, choose one and reject the other. The wisdom of the procedure is questionable. There will be no end to politics.

### **General and Programme Committees**

The Assembly accepted the recommendations which the Nominations Committee had presented.

CCA will now have a different structure. There will be nine programme committees, and no advisory committees. They will be for the following concerns: Mission and Evangelism (including Dialogue), Communication, and Education (including Scholarships), Youth, Women, International Affairs (including Human Rights), Development and Service (including Health issues), Urban Rural Mission (including Race and Minority), Theology (including Faith and Order.)

### **Comments and Questions**

There was much politicking at the Assembly, and considerable horsetrading within national delegations. One got the impression that some of the delegates were far more interested in getting on to committees and positions than in living in Christ with people. Some questions need to be raised.

Were our national delegations really aware of what the CCA is for? CCA *embodies* a vision. The body is visible; the vision often is not. Were the delegates concerned more with the body than with the vision? Did they confuse the bureaucracy of ecumenism with ecumenism itself? This, of course, is a question that Churches and councils must ask themselves. What are the criteria for selecting delegates for the Assembly ?

We have certain given criteria. There are the different categories — youth, women, clergy, laity etc. When we are pre-occupied with such categories, to the exclusion of the more basic criteria like involvement, intelligence, commitment and experience we reduce them to tokenism. There are old people *and* old people even as there are young people *and* young people. There are women *and* women, even as there are bishops *and* bishops. They will all have their place in the Kingdom, but can we afford to accommodate all of them in the leadership of the ecumenical movement ?

The categories we now have were not acquired without a struggle. Are we now in the process of betraying that struggle by absolutising the categories themselves ? *From CCA News.*

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### **Clergy try to Stop the Looting in Britain.**

Liverpool clergymen in the riot-torn area of Toxteth were out in the smoke and rubble of the streets trying desperately to stop the looting - and feeling, as one of them said afterwards, "like King Canute."

As the Rural Dean, the Rev. Simon Starkey, gathered them together in his own St. Bede's for a special Communion Service they were talking of the anger, heartbreak and shame which have followed the chaos.

They spoke, too, of the sheer frustration of people, black and white, which they had feared would "blow the lid off" one day soon. The community, they said, had just "had enough."

Bishop Bill Flagg visited the Liverpool Royal Hospital where he stood appalled beside the chaplain as the injured policemen were brought in, many of them seriously hurt.

"It wasn't a race riot, thank God" he said "The police said whites as well as blacks were attacking them; but we do have problem because it seems absolutely impossible for the blacks, to get jobs, and they know it. But unemployment affects everyone."

"I have only a dozen in my congregations with jobs now, and a neighbouring parish has eight. There is sheer frustration throughout the area."

The hospital chaplain, the Rev. Sam Pratt, a black Liverpoolian, said: "I was mesmerised. I wondered, is this really happening? The police, too, were very dazed, especially the forces brought in from outside the city. When I asked if they felt disillusioned, they replied, 'Yes but we won't give up.' Some of them were only eighteen or nineteen years old.

"The bright, encouraging spot for me has been the way people have wanted spiritual comfort and guidance at this time".

The Rev. David Thompson, of St. Clement's who has been in Toxteth only six months, went out with his wife and tried in vain to check the looting of the shops.

"It was pure theft" he said afterwards. "And the sad thing is that the burning of shops and property has just added to the loss of jobs. Now we are left with the anger, shame and heart break of the people who have lived here for years."

His neighbour at St. Margaret's, the Rev. Collin Oxenforth, described the looting as "disgusting."

Youths tried to smash in the door of the vicarage, where he was sheltering refugees from the burned out Rackets Club and "one visitor from Zurich who had come for a quite week-end". But the local lads from his own parish chased off the raiders, he said.

The Rural Dean told of women with little children in pyjamas who kept going "back to" the shops, taking goods.

"I feel very angry about the kids - but then they express and erupt on behalf of everyone else. I was well aware of the growing resentment of people here."

The calm and courage of the police was amazing, he said. And Mr. Starkey paid tribute, too, to the firemen - for the worst terror was that of the people trapped in flats above the blazing shops, and getting them out had been "touch and go." These people now had nothing; and the Churches were considering what they could do to help the homeless, who were now staying with friends.

The Bishop of Liverpool, the Right Rev. David Sheppard, and the Roman Catholic Archbishop, the Most Rev. Derek Worlock, have called for long-term solutions to the "acute and complex social problems in Liverpool."

### **Strong Methodist support for Covenanting proposals :**

The Methodist Conference, meeting in Norwich, decided to give approval to "Towards Visible Unity: Proposals for a Covenant" by a majority so overwhelming (497-5) that it took the most enthusiastic ecumenists by surprise.

There were only five abstentions in the vote, and the debate lasted little over an hour. At one stage the President (Dr. John Newton) had to appeal to opponents of the plan to speak out, lest the discussion should seem entirely one-sided.

The proposals were introduced by the Conference Secretary Dr. Kenneth Greet, with the assurance that "no point of doctrinal, significance is raised that has not been approved at earlier stages of the ecumenical debate."

The threefold ministry of bishop, priest and deacon was, Dr. Greet declared, "of unique value in signifying and helping to secure continuity with the Apostolic tradition. But he pointed to the assurance given by the Methodist President's Council that the proposed service of reconciliation "contains no act that is intended to be, or can be taken to be, an act of re-ordination of existing ministries."

The second speech in the debate was made by the Rev. Amos Cresswell, of Plymouth (where the Conference will meet next year). He announced himself as a determined opponent of the old Anglican-Methodist reunion scheme, which had seemed "somewhat of a strait-jacket." To his own surprise, however, he found himself completely in favour of the current proposals.

The opposition was led by the Rev. Irene Morrow, who urged the Conference merely to "receive" the proposals and transmit them for study at lower levels of the Church. She warned that the official motion of approval amounted to "provisional legislation", but her amendment was lost on a show of hands.

Another critic was the Rev. Walter Newby, of the Lambeth Mission, who said that, although he was very happy to operate with Anglicans who shared his services Sunday by Sunday, he feared one "vast, monolithic Church." To this Dr. Greet replied that in his experience Methodism was at present too uniform, and that it would benefit from the great diversity which "convenanting" ought to bring.

At least one observer felt that that proposals might well receive a rougher ride in the lesser assemblies of Methodism, but that, when they came back for final approval by the Conference, they

were certain to be endorsed. The difficulties in any alternative ecumenical strategy were shown by the announcement that the United Reformed Church had withdrawn its financial help from a project for a joint new hymnal. It was not a good omen for any future union without the Church of England.

The debate about ways in which Methodism could take episcopacy into its system if covenanting failed lacked excitement. There was general agreement that bishops were desirable, although voices were raised against their power and against "gas and gaiters". But the need to develop Methodist bishops outside the context of covenanting seemed far less likely now than it had done in 1978, when the working party was set up.

The report on episcopacy was commended for study, along with "Towards Visible Unity".

Showing its politically radical stance, the Conference also decided to support inner-city projects by substantial financial aid, to condemn the Trident Missile programme, and even to exclude the National Anthem from the new Hymnal - although so many protests arrived about the last decision that the President had to send a message to the Queen disclaiming any intention of disloyalty.

The decision of the Methodist Conference on Conventing was greeted with prolonged appause when it was announced to the General Synod at its meeting in York. And the Bishop of Norwich (the Right Rev. Maurice Wood) issued a statement - "as Bishop of the host diocese to the Methodist Conference" - in which he gave a warm welcome to its clear decision, saying that it was "an historic day in the life of English Christianity". (C.T.)

#### **SCM Press to take over Epworth Books :**

The Methodist Publishing company, Epworth Press, unable to continue on its own, entered into a working agreement with SCM Press Ltd from September 1.

From that date all the Epworth Press books will be produced, advertised, distributed and sold through the facilities of SCM. But Epworth Books will retain its editorial autonomy, CM's managing director and editor, the Rev. John Bowden, said this week.

They approached us round about Christmas time/when, as was recorded in the agenda of the Methodist Conference, they were unable to meet their commitments - and they asked for our help so that they could keep a publishing presence," said Mr. Bowden.

"From September 1 we act as agents for the publications on their list which are worth keeping - from 90 to 100 titles - and also add new ones. We shall promote and distribute their books, - but they will have the say about what is published.

"The sad thing is that over the last 10 years most of the Free Churches have lost their publishing arms. The Epworth Book room goes right back to the Wesleys, and this is one more example of the contracting of religious publishing. But the positive thing is that we believe that, run within the context of another publishing firm, Epworth books will still have a long and successful life without the heavy overheads of an independent publishing house."

Mr. Bowden said that the first two books published under the new arrangement will be *Beyond Tomorrow*, a study of the Lord's Prayer by Nerille Ward; and *Is Christianity Credible?* a collection of contributions by writers ranging from Sir Norman Anderson to Maurice Wiles. Both will appear as paperbacks in October.

Epworth Press will bring out eight new titles a year. "We are very pleased to be associated with them," said Mr. Bowden. (CT)

### **WCC Breaks Links with 3 Banks :**

The World Council of Churches severed its links with two Swiss Banks and one German Bank doing business with South

Africa and thereby "supporting the system of racism embodied in apartheid."

The decision to break relations with the three banks was taken in line with a 1972 WCC resolution which urged that the WCC terminate its investments in "institutions that perpetuate racism."

Since 1978 at least, says the WCC, German and Swiss Banks have been by far the greatest lenders to South Africa.

However, the WCC will continue to have dealings with banks which fall into the "moderately involved" category. These institutions all have some sort of relationship with South Africa, but, says the WCC, to a far lesser degree than the three cited above.

The WCC feels, therefore, that, as these banks do not measure up to its "most deeply engaged" criterion, no further terminations of WCC accounts are envisaged "at this point." (CT)

#### **CA Issues front line Booklet :**

The Church Army, in cooperation with the Bible Reading Fellowship, has produced a book called "Front Line Praying" for use throughout 1982 - its centenary year.

In it the reader is introduced each week to an area of Church Army work as a subject for prayer and concern.

A spokesman for the organisation said the hope was that through using the book, all friends of the Church Army would each month be praying around the same theme.

The spokesman added: "In a year when many acts of celebration and witness will take place, when special projects will aim to raise substantial sums to ensure the continuation of this work, and when this Army of the Church prepares to face the contemporary challenge of a new decade, this book will serve to remind all who read it of the essential priorities of Christian witness and service.



'Front Line Praying - £2.25 is available from the BRF, 2, Elizabeth Street, S.W.I., or from the Church Army Book Centre, 24, Eccleston Square, S.W.I. (CT)

#### **Synod move to let women be deacons :**

The Anglican General Synod in England returned to the vexed question of women's ministry, with a debate on a proposal that women should be allowed to become deacons.

If the motion and subsequent enabling legislation are passed, the Church of England will become only the seventh of the Anglican Communion's thirty or so provinces and regions to take such a step in addition to those which have already admitted women to the priesthood. (CT)

#### **Jubilee celebrations at Walsingham :**

The Anglican Shrine at Walsingham, focus of devotion for a quarter of a million pilgrims in this year alone, celebrated its golden jubilee in October.

Fifty years ago the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham was carried from the parish church to its home in the Holy House within the newly opened Shrine Church. And, the statue was borne back through the village of Walsingham - "England's Nazareth" - by torchlight, to be received by the parish priest, the Rev. John Barnes, with a Mass of welcome (CT)

#### **Primate attacks British Nationality Bill :**

After denouncing the Nationality Bill when it had its third reading in the House of Lords the Archbishop of Canterbury voted for an Opposition amendment which deplored the Bill's probable effects.

The Primate who said he spoke for the leaders of all the Christian Churches, described the measure as "questionable when judged by moral principles." But the amendment, which claimed that the Bill would result in statelessness for many and would exacerbate racial tension, was defeated by 149 votes to 92, a Government majority of 57; and the Bill was passed back to the Commons.

The Archbishop said the criticisms which he and others had made at the Bill's second reading still stood. It was a complicated Bill then and it was a bad Bill now, for the changes made had not removed the objections put forward by those who felt they must voice the fears of the ethnic minorities - for whom the Bill spelt doubt and uncertainty.

The Churches remained "profoundly unhappy" about the Bill, Dr. Runcie continued, and he added: "We shall seek to help people to understand, it and to claim their rights under it until such time as, I hope, a new Bill based on sounder principles can be introduced."

In drawing up future legislation, the Primate suggested, there should be consultation with the Commission for Racial Equality and the organisations representing the ethnic minorities. The Bill provided a high degree of ministerial discretion - too much, some would say. It could be used helpfully, and he appealed to the Government to use it in that way - for the sensitivity and humanity of Ministers and officials would be greatly needed if the Church's worst fears were to be mitigated. (CT)

#### **Jobless- Dioceses shown concern :**

Three Diocesan Synods have made it clear at recent meetings that the changing of attitudes towards unemployment is an urgent pastoral problem for the Church.

And, as the latest unemployment figures were announced, a group of clergy in the North-East released the result of two surveys among the jobless there, painting what they described as "a harrowing picture of isolation." (CT)

#### **Ex-Archbishop's new post :**

The Most Rev. Donald Seymour Arden, the former Archbishop of Central Africa, is to be Priest-in-Charge of St. Margaret's Uxbridge, in the London Diocese, and Assistant Bishop in the episcopal area of Willesden. (CT)

## **Birmingham 'March of Witness' :**

A recent "March of Witness" through the centre of Birmingham attracted more than two thousand people in what was, say the organisers, "a remarkable event."

The march - with the theme "One nation in Christ" - saw both black and white Christian leaders walk side by side along the same streets, which several months earlier, were the scenes of rioting and looting. (CT)

## **Bishop 'Torn in Half' by Bridge-Building :**

The Bishop of Liverpool (the Rt. Rev. David Sheppard), one of the Church's leading workers for racial justice and harmony, revealed that he felt torn in half trying to be a "bridge person."

He was preaching at a service in Holy Trinity Church, Hull, which had been arranged by Hull Deanery Synod as "a Christian affirmation of our multi-cultural society."

Bishop Sheppard said that to build bridges between racial groups was painful work, but that nevertheless Christians were called to do it. "If we are going to be bridge-builders," he went on, "we need to make the effort to stand in other people's shoes, listen to what they say, and try to understand."

A white Church youth leader had told him how, after challenging young people in a service to give their lives to Christ, three black girls had said they resented being asked to stand out and be different from most other people yet again.

"We need to understand that for many people, black and white, who have been shut from the good things of life, the Christian challenge sounds like that," the Bishop said:

He told the 500-strong Congregation that he was writing a book about the black experience - but "I feel torn in half by trying to be a bridge person." He belonged to two different groups which often had poor opinions of each other.

As a bishop, he said, he was part of the Establishment, yet he represented brothers and sisters who were working-class people, many of whom felt shut out.

### **Farewell to Canon Collins :**

Canon John Collins, one of the most colourful characters at St. Paul's Cathedral, London, for the past thirtythree years, has retired. At a large gathering in the deanery, the Cathedral Staff and congregation presented him and his wife a picture of St. Paul's to mark their gratitude for all his work.

The Dean of St. Paul's the Very Rev. Alan Webster, spoke of the "dynamic and prophetic ministry" exercised by Canon Collins; and of Mrs. Collin's work for causes such as the attack on apartheid, the abolition of the death penalty and the Movement for the Ordination of Women.

Dean Webster said that the CND marches, now revived and bigger than ever, showed the strength of Canon Collin's influence.

Speaking in the Cathedral Canon Douglas Webster observed: "He must be one of the few clergyman of whom nearly everyone has heard. . . he was a friend to hundreds of Africans who have turned to him for help.

Canon Webster added: "We honour him for his initiative his courage, his vision, and for being in that prophetic succession of men who have made others uncomfortable because they have shared with Jesus Christ an overwhelming desire to preach the good news to the poor and bring liberty to the oppressed."

Canon Collins - who will continue as President of International Defence and Aid - has been made a Canon emeritus of St. Paul's by the Bishop of London, Dr. Graham Leonard. (CT)

#### **Prayer vigil for gaoled Soviet Priest :**

Seven Anglican Bishops, all patrons of the Clergy to Defend Russian Christians Group will be leading prayers for the imprisoned Russian Orthodox priest, Fr. Gleb Yakunin, from their pulpits.

They will be commemorating the second anniversary of the arrest of Fr. Yakunin - who is reported to have been fasting against the confiscation of his Bible. Several patrons and committee members will be fasting themselves as a sign of support. (CT)

#### **8,000 Mosques open in Xinjiang Province**

In the People's Republic of China eight thousand mosques are open in the Moslem province of Xinjiang here, the Hongkong-based *South China Morning Post* reported recently.

This appeared as a caption of an UPI picture showing four Moslems entering a mosque in Turfan, Xinjiang province for midday prayers. The report further said that the Arabic script Koran is sold in front of the mosques in China. Pictures of Mecca can be found hanging in private homes. It said that the once prohibited religious activities in China has been resumed.

—Adapted from *Chinese Around the World*  
October, 1981 —

## SRI LANKA CHURCH NEWS

### THE COLOMBO DIOCESAN COUNCIL

The Colombo Diocesan Council began on Tuesday 6th October 1981 with the customary social given by the Rt. Revd. S. W. Fernando, and Mrs. Fernando to the members at the Bishop's House Colombo, and the Diocesan Evensong when the preacher was the Revd. Gerald De Alwis.

The Chief Guest at the sessions was the Chief Justice the Hon. Mr. Neville Samarakoon and other Guests included the best known regular guest for the past several decades, the Revd S. J. De S. Weerasinghe, former Secretary of the Oylon Bible Society,

The general sessions included, besides the usual reports from the departments of the Church's life, the consideration of the Trust Association Bill related to Church Union.

#### The following were elected to the new Standing Committee

*Clergy* — The Rev. P. S. Bhareti, The Rev. B. J. A. Chellish, The Rev. M. Cobban - Lea, The Rev. C. S. C. de Mel, The Rev. G. Karunaratne, The Rev. C. J. S. Samuel  
The Rev. Godwin Weerasuriya.

*Laitry* — Mr. R. F. J. Abayasekera, Mr. C. E. Anandaraman, Dr. C. Canaga Retna, Mrs. Leila Chitty, Mr. Eksith Fernando, Dr. J. N. O. Fernando, Mr. C. St. E. Gunasekera, Dr. A. T. W. P. Jayawardena, Mr. F. Medis, Mr. T. R. Navaratnam, Mr. J. P. Obeyesekera, Mr. I. Paulraj, Mr. Shirley Peiris, Mr. Sydney Puvinyagam, Dr. Anil Salgado

## **What the National Y. W. C. A. provides:**

### **A Quiet Room**

A Quiet Room for all believers set apart for prayer and meditation.

### **Conference Hall**

An elegant Conference Hall suitable for weddings, socials, meetings, seminars and exhibitions. Reduced rates for educational programmes and Christian activities

### **A Board Room**

Which can be hired for meetings.

### **A Student Hostel**

Centrally situated, clean airy rooms, a monthly charge for bed and breakfast. Other meals available at the Rotunda Luncheon Club at subsidised rates.

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Comfortable single and, double rooms & a family room with or without attached toilets available. These rooms provide a panoramic view of the City. Charges for bed and breakfast. Other meals available at the Rotunda Luncheon Club, Reasonable charges and reduced rates for children and students.

Discount on occupation charge for one month.

### **Enquiries Phone 23498**

### **Rotunda Luncheon Club**

*(for members)*

Within easy access of the city for rice and curry meals or light snacks. Luncheon club membership open to all customers. Catering orders, buffet lunches and dinners undertaken. Take-away meals available.

**Open**

Monday to Friday 8.00 a.m. — 5.00 p.m.  
Saturdays 8.00 a.m. — 3.00 p.m.  
Closed on Sundays and Poya days.

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A popular shop for a variety of new and nearly new items—clothes, toiletries, jewellery, books, electrical good etc.

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Wednesday 8.45 a.m. — 12.00 p.m.  
Saturday 9.00 a.m. — 12.00 p.m.

**Vocational Training Institute (Colombo Y.W.C.A.) at Rotunda.**

Provides courses in Shorthand & Typewriting, Scientific Dress making, and Handicrafts. Special language courses in English, German & French. Industrial Sewing.

Training courses in Hair Dressing & Beauty Culture. Salon Rotunda opens daily at 10 a.m. for appointments. Production centre undertakes dress making orders. Enquiries - Phone 35740

**Bandarawela Holiday Home for Working Girls and Guests**

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7 Minutes walk from the railway station

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The Hostess  
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**Details regarding membership etc.**

**National Executive Director, Y W C A Head Qrs. 7, Rotunda Gardens,  
Colombo 3.**

**Tel†phon† 2 8 5 8 9**



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Gunaratne & Co., Ltd. Colombo 10, Sri Lanka.