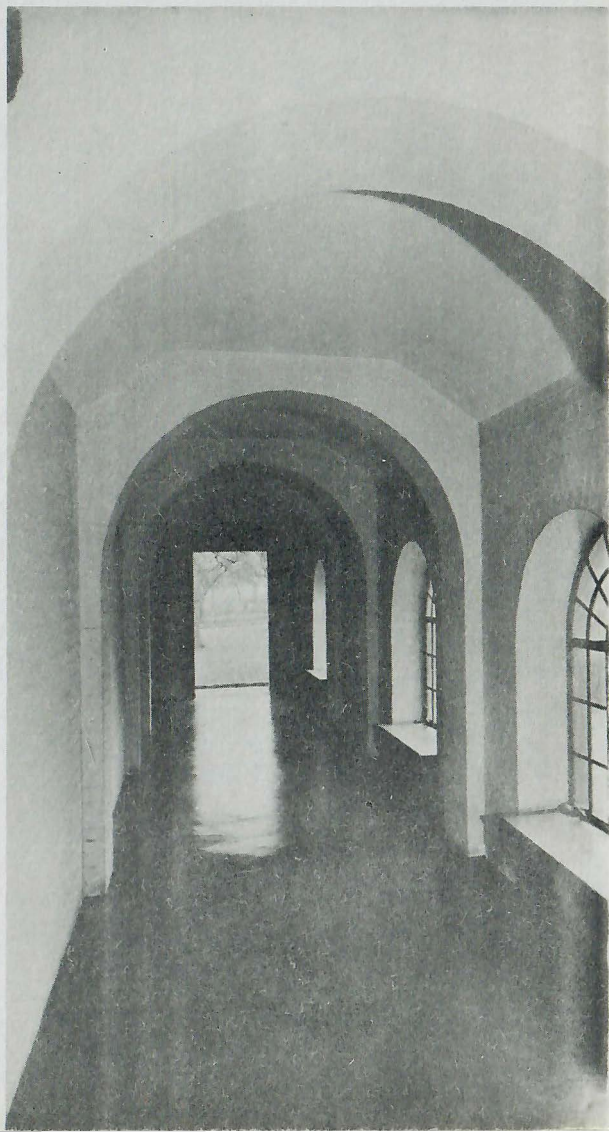


VOLUME I No.2

FAIRACRES

C H R O N I C L E



A D V E N T

Advent is a season of expectation, a vigil season. It is expectation for promised deliverance.

PART OF AN ADVENT HOMILY OF FATHER GILBERT, 1964

" "The whole drama of man and of each individual is linked together as one act of God's loving mercy - creation, redemption and beatification. It is God's gift to his creation to whom he has given life in body soul and spirit with freedom to respond to him. It is to God that man must look, for all comes from God, and it is God who weighs up our response. "Behold I come quickly, saith the Lord, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be." It is God's work that will be fulfilled and will bring in judgment - "Behold God's reward is with him, and God's work is before him" (Is.40: 11). God's work will always be fulfilled. Death closes each man's work and judgment follows. In the whole drama of creation, space and time are nothing without God's purposes. In the final End there can be only heaven - that is, to be in God's will - and hell - that is, the not being in God's will. God is Creator and his will must be done and in so far as his will is not done there is nothing.

THERE COULD BE NO EXPECTATION UNLESS GOD
HAD IMPLANTED IN MAN THE CAPACITY AND DESIRE TO RESPOND:
THAT IS OUR FREEDOM."

THE MOTHER GENERAL'S EDITORIAL

This is in effect a double number of the Chronicle. We gave notice in September that this number would be a memorial to our late Warden, the Reverend Gilbert Shaw.

We are grateful to the Times for allowing us to reproduce the article by Dom Robert Petitpierre, O.S.B. who was one of Father Shaw's oldest friends. Father David Shapland, the Warden of Bede House, was asked by the Church Times to write a full appreciation of Father Shaw, some parts of which we quote with their permission. This paper did, however, leave out one most important section, printed here, which stresses Father Shaw's prophetic sense in the present world situation. To illustrate this, Father Shapland gives us valuable references to Father Shaw's two books, 'A Pilgrim's Book of Prayers' and 'The Face of Love'. We would do well to recall the review of the latter by Julia de Beausobre, best known perhaps as the author of 'The Woman Who Could Not Die', a book which she wrote after her experiences in a Russian concentration camp. She writes - "Father Shaw does not seek to dictate a method or words of prayer but hopes to help others, less conversant with affective prayer than he is, to build up a solid christian disposition of mind and emotion. He may touch off a soul's desire for greater conformity with the divine Will at all times and in all places".

Any memorial of Father Shaw would be incomplete without mention of the enclosed Community for men - so dear to his heart - the Servants of the Will of God, of which, with Father Robert Gofton-Salmond he was a co-founder. We are grateful both to Father Robert and to Father Gregory, the pro-Prior for their contributions.

All these articles are written by members of a family

in loving appreciation of the life and work of their spiritual father. Actually none of them describe his vital sociological work both in Poplar and in his original vision for the work to be carried on at S. Anne's Soho. We are also aware that so much more could be said about him as a director of men and women of prayer living in the world and involved with its manifold claims.

Nothing short of a full scale biography will be needed to pay honour where honour is due. Two or three years ago I was asked by Darton, Longman and Todd to sound Father Gilbert about the writing of such a book, but it was his wish that this should not be done in his lifetime. We were continually taping Father Gilbert when he was reminiscing, so that S.L.G. is a repository for much interesting and informative material. The Community together with our Warden and the Warden of Bede House are Father Shaw's literary executors, and we are fully alive to the privilege and responsibility of fulfilling this charge.

Before his death Father Gilbert edited and revised the intercessory prayers which he wrote over the space of five years from 1960 - 1965 for the fiery Cross Paper published by the Church Union, and these have now been printed by the S.L.G. Press as a Paper Back which is on sale at the three convents, price 6/- plus postage etc. 9d

There is also in the press a book of his poems, for which he himself chose the title of 'Wayfaring' - for as he says in the preface, 'they are to hearten both himself and his fellow pilgrims.' We will let you know later the date of publication.

The Chronicle must always be primarily for its friends the medium of information about the Community, but we are also hoping to bring to your notice articles on spirituality, and other matters of current interest

and importance.

In this and the following number, there will be an article on Father Congreve, S.S.J.E. by our new Warden. Important in itself, it has also special significance for us since Father Congreve was one of those who helped our first founder, Father Hollings, SSJE., to lay those strong roots and firm foundations on which later both Father Cary and Father Gilbert could help to build up the life and work of S.L.G.

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G O D : L I F E A N D L O V E

He calls us not to look back save in loving thanksgiving for his over-ruling providence, but to look forward to the consummation of his glory wherein all things are made new in love, by love, for love. Therefore our prayer is for the increase of love.

G.S. Advent 1959.

"To crown all there must be love, to bind all together and complete the whole." Col. 3: 14.



Gilbert. Warden. S. L. G.

GILBERT SHULDHAM SHAW

AT REST AUGUST 18, 1967

at the

**CONVENT OF THE INCARNATION
FAIRACRES, OXFORD**

FROM THE TIMES. 1 Sept.1967 by DOM ROBERT PETITPIERRE OSB

The death of Father Gilbert Shaw on August 18th has bereft the Church of England of one of its wisest and best beloved priests. Born in 1886, he was educated at Eton and Trinity College Cambridge and was later called to the Bar. He was ordained Deacon in 1925, and after some years spent training Ordinands he became Secretary of the Association for Promoting Retreats. He was himself an eminent retreat conductor.

For eight years, at the request of the Bishop, he ran a welfare centre in Poplar, and one friend has said that Gilbert was at his best sitting and puffing at his pipe in the working men's club there. During the war he founded and ran St. Anne's House, Soho, as a centre of christian dialogue and of a wide range of thinking and practice.

After 1946, he devoted himself specifically to work as adviser and guide to various Religious Communities, where his exceptional knowledge of monastic life and of mystical theology, together with his complete devotion to God, were of outstanding value. A profound theologian he also kept up to date with the latest views on anthropology, sociology and psychology.

To many he will be known chiefly through his books of prayers and their trenchant introductions. But he was also an outstanding spiritual guide to many individuals, and his work both in the theory and practice of exorcism has, for the past forty years, been of immense usefulness.

Throughout his life he showed special interest in the formation and growth of monastic life. In 1924, he was one of the founder members of the Company of the Holy Cross, a group of men living under strict rule and undertaking missions in country parishes. He was also a close friend and adviser to Father William of Glass-

hampton. Later he helped to establish the Community of the Servants of the Will of God at Crawley Down. During his time as Warden of the Community of the Sisters of the Love of God at Fairacres, Oxford (where he died) he was responsible for the foundation of Bede House, Staplehurst, which is a combination of a house for christian dialogue with the hermit life.

FROM FATHER ROBERT, FOUNDER, C.S.W.G.

Father Gilbert Shaw's contact with the Community of the Servants of the Will of God goes back beyond the purchase of Lobswood in 1936 as all that was in my mind had been discussed with him while he came frequently to St. Clement's, City Road, from 1931 until 1938, to hear Confessions and to help in various ways. It was on St. Lawrence's day in 1936 that we both sat in the woods at Lobswood and agreed that this was the place where the vision might materialise. When two laymen came in 1940 and the first tentative Company of the Servants of the Will of God began, Father Gilbert became the first Warden and remained such until 1945. During these years every department of the life received great benefit from him, both material help in the garden and library, and still more spiritually, for he helped and guided both in and out of the Confessional those who came to Lobswood. When the Company of the Servants of the Will of God became the Community in 1948, Lobswood Ltd. was formed to be the Trustees of the place, and from then throughout the rest of his life, Father Gilbert took an active part and attended the meetings of the Directors until his health prevented him from doing so or from visiting the Community as frequently as he had been accustomed to do. It was a great joy that he was able to pay a very short visit not many months before his death. That there is a Lobswood and a Community in it is very largely due to him, so we shall ever be grateful to him for all his wise help and loving concern for our welfare.

G I L B E R T P R O P H E T R E C O N C I L E R .

BY THE PRO-PRIOR, C.S.W.G.

A PROPHEET IN THE CHURCH

Gilbert was a true prophet of God, witnessing in the Church and before the world to God's purpose for man in our time. Along with Father William of Glasshampton, he saw that we are now at the end of an age, an age of Christendom in which Church and State have been yoked together for over sixteen hundred years, and we are also at the beginning of a new age in which the Church must manifest more clearly her union with the suffering and risen Christ, God's servant for the redemption of mankind. Political power has so dominated the progress of the Church in the past that she has largely lost her power to convert the unbelieving masses. This converting power, the power of the Holy Spirit, can only be restored to the Church insofar as she once more learns to follow her Lord gladly in the way of the cross.

It is clearly a time of crisis for the Church. This is inevitable since 'judgment must begin at the house of God'. As Gilbert expressed it in a paraphrase of Hebrews 12: 27, "In these days the shakeable is shaken to reveal the truth unshakeable" (Face of Love p. 63). Christians must now learn how to stand firm as witnesses to 'the truth unshakeable' in a time of violent change, until the Church's rôle in a reordered and more settled social structure has been revealed, unless it be that we are already nearing the End.

Witness had originally the same connotation as martyr, and is expressive of the fundamental christian vocation received in baptism, that of dying and rising again with Christ. Gilbert saw that martyrdom becomes increasingly possible for Christians in a world concerned with the glorification of man in the building up of the temporal

city. Inevitably the presence of Christians must be a hindrance to those who would gain power over the minds of men for their own purposes of domination. Possibly we shall have to endure martyrdom of the mind rather than of the body - 'thought reform' or 'brain-washing' as it is sometimes called. Even now there is an element of the martyrdom of the mind in daily life if Christians are to stand firm amidst the conditioning of advertising, sensational news reporting, cheap entertaining etc., and the mis-directed views of human life which these media attempt to convey.

Consequently at the heart of Gilbert's prophetic understanding of the Church's rôle today, was his concern that Christians should be 'renewed in the spirit of their minds' through growth in prayer. To this end the Church needs a holy priesthood, learned and experienced in the spiritual tradition and able to impart it as the normal basis of life for every Christian man and woman.

Standing firm in truth unshakeable means in practice standing before God in prayer. This is the only true unshakeable relationship. Prayer of this quality can endure while knowing and sharing the world's confusion of mind. "Watch and pray" is the Lord's command, so that through love answering Love in Christian prayer all that falls short of God's purposes in the course of history may be brought to judgment and healing.

A PROPHET FOR MONASTICISM

Gilbert saw the urgent need for monastic communities to recover their function in the Church as witnesses to the essential qualities of Christian life. Their life of withdrawal from 'the city of this passing world' enables them to specialise in developing that corporate unity in love in which the whole of the family life is redirected to glorify the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The very existence of monastic communities is a prophetic sign declaring the meaning of human life; but more than this

the communities are, or should be, centres of stability in God and therefore of reconciling prayer. They are also schools for the Lord's service in which the members can grow in the Holy Spirit and receive charismatic gifts such as prophecy, theology and spiritual paternity for the service of the Church. Monastic communities should therefore become centres around which other Christians can rally for help and encouragement in their own witness in an unbelieving world.

Western monasticism has for too long considered as opposites contemplation and action, withdrawal and mission work, corporate life and solitude. The time has come to reconcile these apparent opposites through a deeper understanding of the ascetic factors involved and to recover a richer flexibility such as existed in the spring-time of monastic history, when much wider opportunities were available for growth in the Holy Spirit for each individual, and when an abundant fruitfulness overflowed into the life of the Church.

Himself a married man with a family, Gilbert had in his long life of prayer and service in a remarkable way reconciled these opposites in himself, and had entered into the reality of the monastic way.

THE ONE GREAT TRADITION OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

Though he was a man of great intellect and learning Gilbert's response to God was simple and childlike. He followed Jesus Christ in the way of the cross as a personal response of love and praise. His dependence upon the loving providence of the Father and upon the light and guidance of the Holy Spirit was also personal and spontaneous, as was his penitence for sin. He could speak with personal knowledge of the redirection of the whole mind (conscious and unconscious) and feeling to greater dependence and attention to God, and of the whole will into a stability of surrender to the divine will. It

was this mature experience of discipleship which opened up for him the Scriptures and the writings of spiritual masters of the Church and convinced him of their unity.

He appreciated the function of biblical criticism in evaluating the human element in the Scriptures, nevertheless, for him, behind the written word of Scripture lay the living and eternal Word of God. Likewise, he could see how the Holy Spirit had taken the things of Christ and given them renewed expression in a variety of theologies and spiritualities clothed in the human characteristics of various people and times. Yet for him there could be only one great tradition underlying all the particular traditions. Whereas some dogmatic and spiritual theologians would emphasise the differences between particular traditions, especially between those of East and West, Gilbert was able to compare and to reconcile them in his own experience and thought.

Gilbert was not a systematic theologian. He wrote no text book on theology or spirituality but the vast body of his as yet unpublished writings is of immense value in this time of recovery and renewal as a source of creative theology. At one time or another he discoursed upon most aspects of the Christian life, thought and prayer, always with deep contemplative insight. Particularly in his later years, he had but to hold the matter in question in his mind under the light of the Holy Spirit and to record what he saw. Because of the way in which they are written, his sentences need to be contemplated as a whole and then prayed back to God, if the reader is to discern their meaning.

WAITING ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

The recovery of the great tradition, the increase of prayer, the renewal of monastic life - all these and other themes central to Gilbert's thought are works of

the Holy Spirit in the Church which he effects through the co-operation of christians, enlightening their minds and uniting their human energies to his divine energy.

Gilbert recognised the danger of christians becoming frustrated in the face of the present urgent problems in the life of the Church and pressing ahead with reforms before the Holy Spirit has made his will known. This kind of self-assertion must inevitably have destructive effects. Hence he strongly emphasised the need for waiting on the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit gives to the Church the grace of unity and we must always be waiting on him to see how to express this unity in the good order of the life of the local christian community, so that each member may find his place of service within it. Thus the unity of the christian community is the basis for the individual's personal growth in the Holy Spirit.

Similarly, the christian community must wait upon the Holy Spirit to fulfil its mission to the world. The fruitfulness of the Church cannot come through man's self-assertion; rather, it must result from an overflow of the love which the Holy Spirit pours into the hearts of christians. The same is true of the local community's participation in the Holy Spirit's work of drawing the whole Church into unity through the ecumenical movement.

During his last illness, Gilbert spoke about the practical aspects of waiting on the Holy Spirit. He said, "The Holy Spirit will never hand you anything on a plate; you have to work for it, and your work for it is

LISTENING

taking the situation you are in, holding it in courage and not being beaten down by it; and your work is

STANDING

holding things without being deflected by your desires or the desires of other people around you. Then things work out through PATIENCE.

FROM THE WARDEN, BEDE HOUSE.

With Extracts from the Church Times by permission.

In 1932, Father Gilbert offered himself for work in Poplar to try to bridge the gap between the Church and the people of the East End where Communist influence was mounting. He and others with him endeavoured to arouse a largely complacent Church to the nature of the social evils of the times.

The darkening years of the late thirties filled him with a yet more prophetic sense of the Church's failure to live to the Gospel. His 'Sydney News Letter' of September 1938 is worth quoting at length. He asks why christians as a whole have little sense of the urgency of the crying need of the world for God.

"What is the reason? Is it that taken as a whole the christian today has lost the christian conception of God and redemption, that man is a perishing creature under God's wrath and can know no beatitude in this world or the next unless restored in Christ? Is it that to most of us religion is not the centre of our life and so the source of our energy and liberty of action, but rather an extra that is held in conflict with many other desires and ambitions of a worldly life and therefore not something we must spread at all costs, that others may know the liberty of Christ? Have the evolutionary ideas of science and the practical efficiencies of materialism so deeply penetrated us that we feel individually powerless - just being swept along in a current of cause and effect - and that it is unreasonable to expect that God should act to achieve anything for us or other people even in the moral sphere.

" No doubt all these suggested answers play a part in the apathy of the christian conscience today. Also many who are most deeply religious in a personal sense have divorced their religious experience from the material,

and even the moral, order of the society in which they live. At the best they see the world worn out and distracted going to its judgment, and they fly from it, sadly and pessimistically, to the desert of a spiritual isolation. Or, at the worst, they take refuge for their own sakes in a piety which seeks only to save their own souls. We have lost the Gospel conception of the catastrophic power of the victorious Christ, through suffering overcoming sin and releasing in his Church the condemning, judging, invigorating power of the Holy Ghost.

" There will be no urgency until we recover and know, not merely talk about, the eternal value of individual souls, so that we are willing at all costs to fight and labour for their union with God and the betterment of the conditions under which they have to live out their earthly life.

" Life is one, and the sins and separations of one man affect the lives and opportunities of other men. Men sin and cause other men to sin. Christians neglect their task of spreading the Gospel and so the world sinks into inevitable confusion and disaster in which souls are plunged and infected by the corporate evil. Just as in the mystery of the Godhead there is no separation of the Persons of the Trinity, so each individual is one with the society of which he is a member for good or evil, and can never be separated from the unity of human life. Man's attempt to separate himself from his fellows, and to exalt himself at the expense of others, is an insult to the divine purpose of his creation. Inevitably it brings on him and on society the punishment of sin.

" There is urgent need today for the realisation of judgment. Equally there is a need of an urgency to convert souls. It is an urgency of choice between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Mammon. It is an urgency of choice between the liberty of Christ and the bondage of the prince of this world. It is not a question of doing good to people or just improving conditions or of

sending out missionaries because heathen people are so undeveloped and uncivilised. It is the recovery of the Gospel standpoint that God is righteous and that he created man in his own image to live in self-sacrificing love and so to know him and find the end of his existence. It is the living knowledge that God so loved the world that he gave the Saviour in whom, if men would only believe, they would find eternal life and not perish. It is a spiritual compassion that would lift all men to God - a spiritual passion of love to God that is in pain as long as his will is frustrated by the many miserable insufficiencies of our multitudinous human idolatries."

Those last three sentences above describe perfectly Father Shaw's own ministry of the years in which he gave himself to the people of the East End, himself praying incessantly in the spirit of the words of S. Ignatius of Loyola, "O God, if man did but know thee all things would be put right". It is no wonder that he became accepted by the East Enders, trusted by them, and loved by them. "Father Shaw, O he's all right" - that phrase was heard as often from communist as from christian lips, for "Father Shaw" had come to mean integrity, impartial and compassionate, had come to mean justice, sought for, fought for and given in love. Small wonder too, that Maurice Reckitt wrote, "We need a Sydney in every slum".

But nine years lived and given in this way and culminating in the wartime devastation of the East End were to take their toll. After the blitz, Gilbert Shaw was very nearly played out, but his work in Poplar had perforce been accomplished for the old East End had disappeared not only so largely in actuality but, perhaps, even more so in ethos and need.

From 1940, his ministry continued in a diversity of ways. His work of direction ever grew, his guidance being particularly sought by priests and religious. His christian social action expressed itself in active help of the Industrial Christian Fellowship. His constant

witness to contemplative life and prayer led to his close connection with the foundation and establishment of the enclosed community for men at Crawley Down. Father William of Glasshampton died in 1937. Father Robert Goffon-Salmond, Father Superior CSWG, 1953 - 1965, left his East End living and went to Crawley Down in 1938. The two men had met through Father Shaw who thus in himself, made the link between Glasshampton and the new foundation. He also at this time edited that collection of the Burgh Booklets and other earlier writings which saw publication in 1945 as "A Pilgrim's Book of Prayers".

In 1945, at the request of Bishop Wand, he went as Warden of St. Anne's Church House, Soho, to lead a team of priests and other christian workers in a new movement of evangelism amongst the more educated folk of London's West End. Using St. Thomas' Regent St. the Toc H centre in Soho Square, and occasionally the Kingsway Hall, as well as St. Anne's itself, a series of conventions, meetings, discussions and services were arranged at which christians, priests, lay and religious, expounded christian doctrine or applied that same doctrine to the dilemmas of the day.

Fr. Shaw left St. Anne's in 1946, and the next decade found him undertaking a variety of activities, though always against that constant background of the work of the direction of souls. He became the Managing Director of the Church Times; he served as a member of the SPCK committee assessing religious films. For many years he was associated in spiritual friendship with the Community of the Holy Name of Jesus, Malvern Link, and he was the Confessor Extraordinary to the Wantage Sisters at Buxted from 1955 - 1966. He tended now to limit the taxing work of retreat conducting to retreats and quiet days for priests, a right priority born from his firmly held conviction that there could be little or no deepening of the general spirituality of the Church that did not begin and continue with the deepening of the spiritual life of the priests. Towards the end of this period too, he was

working on his second volume of affective prayer, "The Face of Love" although it was not to be published until 1958. This, his major work, focusses in the passion the way to the resurrection and so gives the answer to many of the critical needs of the present day.

The early fifties proved a dark period for Gilbert Shaw, and he was tempted to feel that his life-long witness to contemplative life and prayer had been largely fruitless and that his mission to the contemplatives in the world and the building up of priests who could be spiritual directors was not going to be realised. But towards the end of 1957 a period of renewed confidence began. Far from his work coming to an end, it now in these last ten years of his life, was to find an ever growing fruition. In this period one enclosed Religious community figured pre-eminently, the Sisters of the Love of God whose Mother House is at Fairacres, Oxford. Shaw was at first simply friend and adviser to the Community, then in 1962 Confessor Extraordinary, and then in 1964, Warden - a position which he held until his death. In the Sisters of the Love of God he found a Community consecrated to that God-awareness which is the very heart of all christian life, a Community supple to the Spirit amid the ferment of the times, a Community ready to listen, to learn, to grow. In Gilbert Shaw the Community found a priest who could speak from knowledge of the entire breadth and depth of that abiding in Christ which is the spiritual life, a priest who could lead them to a deep renewal of their own common life, sifting with discretion essentials from non-essentials and applying them anew to the exigencies of the day, a priest who could at once both challenge and yet draw them into becoming that focus of love which is the purpose, and should be the overflowing glory, of the coenobitic life, a corporate expression of what life in Christ really is.

In retreat, conference and commentary, Shaw indeed gave of the fruits of his contemplation and of his depth of theological understanding. It is to be hoped that

much of this wealth of material will later become available to a wider public. Much of it is invaluable. Few directors of recent generations, for example, have had such a clear knowledge of the blind alleys, the subtle subterfuges of the soul, the false byeways or 'mysticalities' as he was wont to call them, that ever beckon off that strait and narrow way which is life in Christ; and his severity in direction was born from this clarity of vision. Likewise the knowledge that was his through his special vocation as an exorcist and from his particular gift for discerning of spirits, was quite unparalleled.

If classification had to be made, he would call himself an ascetic and mystical theologian but in truth he was simply a theologian proper, that is, a man in whom biblical, dogmatic and ascetic theology were always one and had born their common and purposed fruit, the mystical knowledge of God.

He himself had always seen as the main objective of his life those same things for which Father William had ever lived and for which, indeed, he had given himself in death; the witness to the one great tradition of christian contemplative spirituality, the direction of contemplatives both in community and in the world, the building up of prayerful priests who could be spiritual directors, and the work of Christian unity. All those things found their fulfilment in these latter years, both in the Community and through the Community to that wider family gathered about it, and in its associations and contacts with other Communities and other Churches.

In particular the foundation of Bede House, Siaplehurst, Kent in 1965 gave him great joy. This further extension of the Community's life which represents both a real recovery of the solitary life within the Anglican Church, and the setting up of a centre for prayer and for the study of christian spirituality open to priests, religious and laity, was very dear to his heart and is in many ways his immediate and tangible memorial. His

abiding memorial, however, will surely be those many souls whom he has built up in Christ and whose desires he has set on God alone. It is from amongst these too, that we must look for the continuing expression of his vision. Perhaps the essence of that vision and of his prophetic message to our times can be epitomised by this final paragraph from his introduction to "A Pilgrim's Book of Prayers".

" To be free to serve man in God's way, the christian must first detach himself from the human ways of local loyalties and strong natural emotions, and learn the justice, truth and impartiality described in Scripture; 'He sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.' Such a discipline is unpalatable to the natural man, and likely to be misunderstood for he thinks of it as the death of nature when, in reality, it is the death of all that separates; it is the birth of liberty and the fulfilment of the natural in the power of the spiritual. Without this rebirth and redirection prayer will be cold and formal, or self-expressive and self-interested. A humanism that ignores the necessity for the individual struggle for holiness and loses sight of the unique claims of God upon personal devotion will have little power to overcome the inertia and the temptations of the material environment, and so will have little energy to serve others, except in ways that imply little or no real or sustained self-sacrifice. If God is to be known, the world and the self have to be put into their proper place: that is, put into subjection to God. To die to the world, to lose the life of individual self-centredness so as to be alive in union with eternal being may seem to be a hard and circumscribing counsel, yet it is the only way to the liberty that possesses the world. To lift the heart in prayer in order to seek a kingdom not made with hands does not mean that the pilgrims whose hearts are lonely because their treasure is hid beyond all earthly desires, have turned their backs on the things of the world and all its human complexities. They approach it from another side, that of the eternal,

for they must see and feel the tragedy and futility of human life and activity without God as its end and its direction, and to know the weakness and sinfulness of their own unaided natural existence, and the need of their dependence upon the supernatural life of union with the Divine Lord.

The world has many lovers and God, alas, how few."

* * * * *

A GAELIC NIGHT PRAYER

I will not lie down with evil,
Nor evil lie down with me;
But I will lie down with God,
And God will lie down with me.

I lie down tonight with the Triune of my strength,
with the Father,
with Jesus,
with the Spirit of Might.

FROM THE WARDEN, S.L.G.

The Community of the Sisters of the Love of God can never forget how much it owes to the Society of St. John the Evangelist at Cowley. Not only were its first two fathers founder, Father Hollings and Father Cary, both priests of that Society, but much of its tradition has been drawn from the teaching of Father Benson himself and the first Cowley Fathers. Among them no figure more deserves to be rediscovered than that of Father Congreve who was closely associated with Father Hollings in the earliest days of S. L. G.

Since all true renewal in the Church must involve not only an openness to what God is saying to us in our own day, but also a greater fidelity to what he has shown us in the past, it seemed that it might be useful to reproduce here an article which I wrote before I was at all closely connected with S. L. G., an article which is devoted to the teaching of Father Congreve and which shows in a remarkable way, how much the latest developments in the Community's life have been a direct expression of the tradition in which it was founded.

THE SUBSTANCE OF JOY

A STUDY OF FATHER CONGREVE.

During the first fifty years of its existence, the Society of St. John the Evangelist, the community which Father Benson founded at Cowley in 1866, gathered to itself a remarkably gifted and able group of men. They were men of very diverse and distinct personalities, but they were united by a common debt to the founder of their society, and one can perceive in their work a combination of intellectual integrity and spiritual depth which clearly owes much to the mind of Father Benson. The founder had insisted that much of

the work of the society must be intellectual, dealing with problems of belief and conduct, and yet that none of its work should be merely intellectual. "The use of the intellect is", he had written, "that by knowing the things of God we may attain to the experimental knowledge of God's love. Otherwise our learning is only like a staircase leading to the top of a ruined tower", and again, "We have not to maintain truth, but to live in truth so that it maintains us." Among those who were most closely associated with Father Benson in the early days of the Community's life there is perhaps no figure more attractive than that of Father Congreve, and none in whom we can see more clearly the assimilation and the transformation of Father Benson's mind, in the life of a devoted and discriminating disciple.

The contrast in character between the two men is in itself, a fascinating study. Father Benson was seen by almost all who came in contact with him as stern and powerful, almost aloof in his isolation, burning with love and devotion towards God, unsparing in his discipline of himself, and sometimes seemingly insensitive to the calls of human affection. George Congreve was a person of almost exactly opposite temperament, a sensitive and deeply affectionate nature, dependent on relationships with others, vividly alive to natural and artistic beauty, tending always to see God in and through his creation, rather than apart from it. Between the two men there existed a deep affection, a relationship which, because on the human level it must have encountered difficulties, was all the more fruitful and enriching at the level of the life in Christ. In the writings of Father Congreve, we can observe, not only a fastidious prose stylist, but also a deep and widely read mind, taking and reshaping ideas from the older man AND DRAWING OUT THE POSITIVE IMPLICATIONS which at times were hidden in the negative statements of Father Benson. We can see in the conjunction of the two an example of the paradoxical truth that the more complete the

renunciation of the world involved in monasticism, the deeper is the understanding which the monk can bring to the renewal and healing of the world. He who loses his life shall save it.

In one particular instance we are able to follow in detail the way in which Father Congreve takes up and polishes an image thrown out at speed by Father Benson, In the Society's long retreat, either in 1874 or 1875, years in which Father Congreve was a novice, the founder had said, "Our Eucharists are a planting of the root, hidden within us, and that root must rise up and blossom in our daily Office. We must realise thus how our Baptismal life, by which we are really and truly incorporated into Christ, and our Eucharistic life, by which that Baptismal life is nourished, rise up into the sublime dignity of our daily Office - the Psalter, the anthology of God, the blossoming of the divine glory." And here is the same image after it has lived and worked for thirty years in the mind of Father Congreve. "We learnt long ago, that Christ in the Holy Eucharist is the living root, and the Divine Office which we say daily is a blossoming of the tree which springs from it. Sometimes our psalms will be but as the tangle of the dead forest in winter; words, words: we said them all in due order, and did not know what we were saying. It was nothing but a thicket of sounds in which our intelligence and our hearts were lost. But another day, when we sought Christ at the altar in the morning, and carried him risen from the dead in wakeful hearts through the hours, how every verse came to life, how we saw the bare branches bud and bloom blossoms - not leaves merely of natural intelligence, but the wonder and freshness of spiritual meanings and messages that nature cannot originate, the thoughts of Christ budding age after age, and bringing forth new flowers and fruit in the Psalter." The simplicity of Father Benson's original picture has indeed blossomed out, and in gaining literary artifice, it has not lost its theological depth.

When we examine Father Congreve's writings we find in them a number of recurring themes. Here, I want to examine one of them, the thought of the restoration of the unity of mankind, and of the whole creation in Christ. Father Congreve publishes no systematic theological works but we should be very much in error if we supposed for this reason that we could find no depth of theological thinking in his writings. Throughout his work he handles the theme of Christus Consummator with genuine and creative power. We may look first of all at his treatment of this subject in direct relationship to the doctrine of the Church and the Communion of Saints. "The first result of the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was the creation of this new mystery, the restoration of the broken unity of mankind in Christ. "There is neither Greek nor Jew, bond nor free, male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." This was the Gospel of St Paul, the ministry of which filled his apostolate with wonder and joy - the gathering together of all races in Christ, the inauguration of the Communion of Saints in the Church of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit." And he goes on, by pointing out how this new mystery is the fulfilment of man's original destiny. "The restoration of the unity of mankind is a consummation of which the world has dreamed for ages. A mysterious need of fellowship is the very framework of human nature. All the tragedies of the world spring from the essential incompleteness of every unit of the race. We were not created to be mutually independent, a sand-heap of individual perfections. No man can become his true self apart from the relations which link him to all around him. Every faculty needs the co-operation of our neighbours to elicit and give it scope." We can see in these words the advantage of a theology which has been lived, and the insight both psychological and spiritual which comes from living in the truth, so as to be maintained by it, rather than simply supporting correct doctrines.

To be concluded.

C O M M U N I T Y N O T E S

FROM MOTHER

THE WARDEN On September 28th 1967 we elected the Rev^d
A.M. Allchin, Librarian of Pusey House, as
our Warden. He was installed by the Visitor, the Bishop
of Oxford on November 28th.

COMMUNITY OFFICERS.

During the last month we have had a
'round-a-bout' of the Community Officers.

Mother Jane moves from being Novice Mistress to being
Prioress at Fairacres.

Mother Elizabeth, whom many of you have known for years
in key positions in the Community, is
still to be known as Mother Elizabeth in recognition of
her status as a senior counsellor.

Sister Eileen Mary is the new Novice Mistress.

Mother Mary Magdalene is the new Prioress of the Convent
of Dudwell St. Mary, Burwash.

Almost the last words Father Shaw said to me about
the Community before he died were, "We must go on helping
them to become a balanced Community". It is in order
to achieve this balance that it is right for as many
Sisters as possible to have the experience of sharing
in the expanding life and work of the Community by being
given opportunities to exercise their various gifts and
capacities.

PROFESSION. We thank God for the profession of Sister
Julia of the Divine Compassion on Oct. 4th.

NOVITIATE. We have several 'nibblers' for the Novitiate
from abroad as well as from nearer at hand.

One of the results of renewal within the Religious Life especially since the last two large Conferences at Oxford, is that we are hardly ever without some members from other Religious Orders staying with us to share our life for a time of retreat or rest, and always for the sharing of common problems.

We have much appreciated the fact that the Working Party of the Advisory Council for Religious Life has met at Fairacres at regular intervals this year in order to work out together the implications of what renewal means in the present day situation.

Among those who visited us during the last three months is Canon Dessain from the Archdiocese of Malines. He spent a very happy afternoon with us, sharing the hopes and experiences of his extensive work for unity.

The Mother General and Novice Mistress of a large American Roman Catholic Community - the Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary - shared our life for a weekend and the similarity of the aims and ideals of the two Communities has provided a basis for a firm and lasting friendship.

Two German Benedictine monks studying in Oxford came to tea one day. On another afternoon, twelve Anglican Franciscan Novices from Cerne Abbas who were staying at Cowley paid a profitable visit to Fairacres.

* * * * *

We welcome the following

OBLATES

Two new Novice Oblates.

COMPANIONS

Muriel Hooper (Miss) 14, Gordon St. Ottawa. Ont. Canada.
Jean Forder (Miss) S. Faith's, The Pas, Manitoba, Canada.
Evelyn D'Alessandro (Mrs) 4, Squitchley Lane, Oxford.

FELLOWSHIP OF THE LOVE OF GOD

Barbara Chatwin (Dss) 270, Thimblemill Rd. Smethick.
Peggy Morgan (Mrs) 12, Newmarket Ave. Hala Car, Lancaster
Irene Lapsley (Miss) Josephine Butler College,
34, Alexandra Drive, Liverpool 17.
Evelyn Born (Miss) 7, Chelsea Embankment, London S.W.3.
M.Lovelock (Miss) Kingsnote, Fittleworth, Pulborough.Sx.
Hope Freeman (Miss) Aldemoor, Fittleworth, Pulborough.
Frances Bowman (Miss) 9, Barn Ave. Brook St. Watlington.
J.Coutts (Rev) St.Gabriel's, Bryn Rd. Swansea.

Change of Address

Dr. S. Khuri-Otaqui, P.O.Box 19/0082, Jerusalem.
Mary Roberts (Mrs) Bramley Cottage, Whitesmith, Nr.Lewes.
Effie Palethorpe (Mrs) 27, Sinclair Rd. London W.14.

R.I.P. The Reverend Harry Henderson.

FRIENDS OF FAIRACRES

Eileen Armstrong (Mrs) Flat 1, Clydedale, College Rd.
Buxton.
Canon J.D.How { The Parsonage, St.Lawrence, Barbados
Ethel How (Mrs) { W.Indies
Muriel Shaw (Miss) 16, Stanmore Rd. Thorpe St. Andrew,
Norwich Nor 47T.
J.H.Cranswick (Rev) 2, Kingston Court, Abdon Ave, B'ham 29.
Gladys Purves (Mrs) 246, Canongate, Edinburgh.
John Squire (Rev) St. Andrew's Vicarage, Taunton, Som.
Canon G.H.Darke { Christ Church Rectory, Yeronga, Brisbane,
and Mrs Darke { Queensland 4104, Australia.
L.M.Young (Mrs) 35, Kingsley Parade, Yeronga (as above)
Agnes Carnegie (Miss) 50, Fountainhill Rd Aberdeen AB24EH
S.L.Jackson (Miss) Springfield St. Luke, 24, Surley Row
Caversham, Reading.

May the secretary - Miss Jefferies, Riseley, Georgeham,
Braunton, N.Devon be informed of any change of address
by those who pay subscriptions by Banker's Order ?

FRIENDS OF FAIRACRES⁹ ACCOUNTS, JUNE - OCTOBER 31 st 1967

Receipts

Balance at Bank May 31st 1967	£ 161 5. 7
Subscriptions and Donations	146.18. 6
	<u>£ 308. 4. 1</u>

Expenditure

Cheque to Mother General S.L.G.	£ 100. 0. 0
Chronicle Vol I. No.1 ***	11. 2. 0
Postage on same	4. 13. 0
Balance in hand	192. 9. 1
	<u><u>£ 308 4. 1</u></u>

Friends may either send subscriptions for the Chronicle direct to Fairacres or have it subtracted from their donation. ***

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We have been seriously thinking about the sending out of our Community Christmas card which has reached the snowballing total of not less than seven hundred⁹. This, in terms of envelopes and stamps, even though the card is both home designed and home printed, is a major consideration. I know you will understand if we omit this outward expression of our constant prayer and our remembrance of you all, and take this opportunity to wish you a most happy and blessed Christmas.

May the Incarnate Lord bring you his joy and his everlasting peace.

BOOK LIST

BY THE WARDEN OF BEDE HOUSE.

- The Grave of God: Has the Church a Future ?
Fr. Robert Adolfe, O.S.A. Burns and Oates 12/6d
- Prayer as a Political Problem.
Jean Daniélou. Burns and Oates 12/6d
- Church and World
Hans Urs von Balthasar Herder & Herder 40/-

Ideally, these three books by Roman theologians should be read together. All are concerned with the basic questions ~ what is, and what is not, of the essence of the Church? What is the relationship between the Church and the world? What, today, is the way of renewal for the Church and, through the Church, for the world?

The first sees the Church's failure (a failure growing from the fourth century onwards) as a failure to be in and of the way of "kenosis", the Christ way of self-emptying, charity, simplicity and humility.

The second yet reminds us that the Church must never follow a way which turns her into a small, élite, sect standing quite apart from a completely secularised civilisation. On the contrary the Church must wholly involve herself in struggles to bring the earthly city into conformity with the heavenly and so keep alive throughout all human doing that religious dimension which alone makes civilisation possible.

The third, at once the stiffest yet most rewarding

reading of the three, approaches the mystery of the Church - her essence, her forms, her many vocations within the one common life, and the relationship of that life to the world - only through the prior mysteries of the Christ and of the Trinity.

Ecclesiology has no life of its own apart from Christology, and Christology apart from trinitarian theology. We can only understand the mission of the Church - "the Church made world" - from within the mission of "the Word made flesh", and the mission of the "Word made flesh" from within the Triune mystery of the Godhead. This is a most profound book, illuminated by and illuminating the scriptures on every page, and opening the whole contemporary situation within the Church to those eternal verities which alone can transform it.

The Art of Prayer - An Orthodox Anthology

Faber & Faber 50/-d

A big, but by far the best, book on the spiritual life published in recent years. Mainly quotations from the writings of Bishop Theophan the Recluse, one of the greatest spiritual guides of the nineteenth century in Russia, and as compiled by Abbot Chariton of the Monastery of Valamo. There is a valuable introduction by Father Timothy Ware. The whole treasures of Orthodox spirituality are set out in short, easily readable, paragraphs, which at one and the same time enlighten the mind and draw the heart to prayer.

The Religion of Teilhard de Chardin

Henri de Lubac, S.J.

Collins

42/-d

Probably the definitive work on Teilhard's basic thought, analysing both his published and unpublished writings.

Principles of Christian Theology

John Macquarrie.

S.C.M.

50/-d

Christian systematic theology in one volume. A book which has been very widely praised as presenting a re-statement of the whole framework of christian orthodoxy against the background of the contemporary debate, and as taking full cognisance of the beliefs and attitudes of the modern world.

God Is With Us

Ladislaus Boros.

Burns & Oates

35/-d

A gem of a book. Boros simply contemplates various aspects of the life of Jesus as shown to us in the Gospels and shows how in each case we are faced with a reality beyond the bounds of the merely human. This book draws one back to the mystery and wonder of Jesus as very few recent works have done.

On Trying to be Human.

25/-d

The Transformation of Man

30/-d

Rosemary Haughton.

Geoffrey Chapman.

Two excellent statements, by a mother of nine children, of the meaning of human relationships and maturity within the transforming common life of the Body of Christ.

Alternatives to Christian Belief

Leslie Paul.

Hodder & Stoughton. 30/-d

This is a first-class assessment of the various intellectual and spiritual positions held by non-christian twentieth century man, which in itself greatly clarifies the christian prophetic comment on the contemporary search for meaning.

Children's Letters to God.

Collins

6/-d

A must for Christmas. Very funny but equally profound! Theology in the making!

For those who have not read them already : -

King Solomon's Ring)

Man meets Dog (Konrad Lorenz

On Aggression)

The beauty and the beastliness, the joy and the humour of the animal world of which we are part.

Tibetan Venture

C.G.Lewis

Robert Holt

21/ d

An ordinands year in India. A very readable bedside book with a penetrating appraisal of Western Christianity made against the background of a first-hand experience of Buddhist and Hindu life

Practice of the Presence of God.

Brother Lawrence.

6/-d

A new, and beautifully produced, edition of this ever contemporary classic, obtainable from the Carmelite Book Service, Carmelite Monastery, Boars Hill, Oxford.

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Apology

We regret that in some copies one or two letters may be faint, but the machine broke down.

