

The Parish Magazine of FENSTANTON & HILTON

August, 1951

Price 4d.

VICAR :

THE REVD. HERBERT MOORE, M.A.
Fenstanton Vicarage, Huntingdon.
Telephone : Saint Ives 3334

Ss. Peter and Paul, Fenstanton.

SUNDAY SERVICES :- 8 a.m. Holy Communion

10 a.m. Sung Eucharist.

3 p.m. Sunday School.

7 p.m. Evensong and Sermon

WEEKDAYS :- Holy Communion at 7 a.m. as announced; on Greater
Saints Days also at 9.30 a.m.

MOTHERS' UNION :- Meeting the second Wednesday in each month at 3 p.m.

S. Mary Magdalene, Hilton

SUNDAY SERVICES :- 9 a.m. Holy Communion

11.15 a.m. Children's Service

5.30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon

Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals by arrangement with the Vicar

My Dear People,

The Everlasting Encouragement

A good many parish magazines, at this time of the year, seem to have similar words of exhortation from the parish priest to his flock, about not forgetting the duty of public worship during holiday times. At first sight, it seems rather pessimistic on the part of the parsons. Can't they trust their people? Well, I suppose their fears about what will happen are based on past—and disappointing—experience.

It is true that some people go to church when away on holiday; some people even go, who are rather bad about going to their own church at home. I suppose it must be the novelty that attracts them.

But it is also true that there is a very large number of people, who are tolerably regular about public worship during the more chilly part of the year (provided, of course, it is not too cold); but when the summer weather comes, somehow churchgoing gets crowded out, whether they are at home or on holiday.

Now before you skip the rest of this letter because you are impatient with it, just stop a moment and think honestly about yourself. Does the sunshine affect your churchgoing? Do you find other things to do and other places to visit, which make you neglect public worship?

“Sunday is my only free day”, you may object; “surely I may enjoy myself in a harmless way, and do what I want”. Of course you may. But that need not rule out God. You can go to church early, or go late; you can go at home, or go somewhere else. But you ought to go, somewhere, sometime. That is, after all, what the Lord's Day is for. It is perfectly all right to do other things as well; but not instead.

Yours sincerely,

HERBERT MOORE.

NEWS FROM AFAR

A Hard School

What would the young people think if they were asked to attend for six months a special training course in Christian life and doctrine, like the school thus described in a recent issue of the magazine *Commonwealth*?

“The young people, boys and girls, get up at 4 a.m., winter and summer alike. They wash in the open air and then do some physical drill. They are then divided into small groups (of not more than eleven persons) in which they meditate on doctrine and discuss important questions. Silence is compulsory apart from the discussion.

“At noon they break their fast with a frugal meal, taken hastily, sitting on benches or standing. The work, done in common, of cleaning the establishment follows. The rest of the afternoon is spent in sports, singing, folk-dancing, and lectures. Supper, another frugal meal, is again eaten hastily. At 9 p.m. the ‘great silence’ begins, which must be kept until the following morning.

“Nobody is allowed out during the day, except for half a day on Sundays. They may not receive visitors for more than half an hour.

“As well as the harsh physical discipline there is a mental training almost as gruesome. Students have to accuse themselves of their faults in public, and to take humbly the accusations made by others. If they misbehave, for instance, by talking during the ‘great silence’, or smoke, they are publicly punished or even expelled.”

What is this school? A Trappist monastery? A training course for Christian missionaries?

No; it is a training programme for Communist youth in China. The doctrine they study is Marxist-Leninist teaching. The missionary work for which they are preparing themselves is the organisation of Communist cells in factories or schools. And these young people, in such schools all over Red China, “accept their assignment as a mission and devote themselves with a keenness and enthusiasm worthy of a better cause”, according to the Revd. Nicholas Maestrini, who sends the account from Hong Kong.

We ask again; how would our young people respond to the challenge of such rigorous training in Christian life and doctrine, in order that they might spread it among their companions at school and in factories and offices? And what would be the result, if the Church were to challenge them to take their religion as seriously as that?

* * * *

Do we ever thank God for our quiet churches and all the facilities available which make it possible for us to worship surrounded by beauty and order? Perhaps if we went on an imaginary trek with a missionary priest in Southern Rhodesia, it would make us count our blessings. Every infant he baptises is “done” in the bowl which he carries with him for personal washing. There are no fonts in these churches; and it is better to use a bowl which he knows is clean and has boiled water in it, than to rely on any dish which a member of the congregation may produce and which is certain to contain dark muddy water. He can usually get a stool to stand the

bowl on ; although most people sit on the floor in their huts, more often than not teachers have stools or chairs. But recently none was available so he had to get a man to be a human font and hold the bowl for him. Many of our churches at home are possessed of beautiful and valuable vessels and cruets, used in the celebration of Holy Eucharist: this priest uses two ex-Detroit bottles!

THE PARISH CHURCH OF HILTON

III

Now we have a clear view from the Nave of the church, through the chancel arch, to the Altar and East Window. It is interesting to reflect that the plan in the minds of the original builders was a rather different one. The winding stone staircase to the north of the chancel, just by the pulpit, tells us that there must originally have been a screen occupying a good deal of the space beneath the chancel arch. And it is likely to have been a fairly substantial structure, as the staircase indicates that it had a small gallery at the top (called a rood loft), which a man could have stood in, and possibly walked along. The purpose of such a loft was to accommodate the small organ and the soloists of the choir. At great festivals it was decorated and adorned with candles. In Norman times the chancel screen had often been made in stone, but by the time of Hilton church they were very generally of wood, often elaborately carved and of massive proportions.

All the same, it is difficult to imagine that an instrument of any size, or many singers, could have been fitted into a loft on the chancel screen in this church, because there could not possibly have been much room. The chancel arch itself is not very high, and not very wide. Anyway, we can only guess at the shape and size of the screen now ; because, as in the case of so many churches in this part of the country, all traces of it have disappeared, except for some remnants of the staircase.

So now, with the disappearance of the original screen, and the removal of the somewhat temporary structure erected in the last century, we have a clear and uninterrupted view from west to east. And there is a lot to be said for it. If it is not possible to have a really fine screen, which is a genuine adornment (and such a thing is out of the question for us at the moment), surely the best thing is to have the altar visible, as the focal point on which the eye of the worshipper may rest. After all, the fundamental purpose of a church is to provide suitable shelter for the altar.

(To be continued.)

FENSTANTON

ASSUMPTION of BLESSED VIRGIN MARY,
Wednesday, August 15th.—9.30 a.m., Holy Communion.

S. BARTHOLOMEW, Ap., Friday, August 24th.—9.30 a.m., Holy Communion.

Recent Events

The Annual Fete realised a net sum of just over £66. All things considered—especially the facts that it had to be held indoors through uncertainty of weather, and that the high cost of living makes people careful—it is a reasonable result and we are grateful for it. Many thanks to all who worked and all who supported.

The Choir had the chance of taking part in a Diocesan Choral Festival in Ely Cathedral a few weeks back. There were nearly seven hundred people singing, and walking in procession. Truly a memorable and inspiring occasion.

The Sunday School children and their mothers had an enjoyable expedition to Wicksteed Park, in bright sunshine. We chose quite the right time, because the next day the weather broke, with heavy storms and a much lower temperature (but we hope this is only temporary).

Parish Registers

Holy Baptism

July 22nd.—Derek Gordon, son of William Henry and Emily Frances Smith.

Collections

	£	s.	d.
Feast Sunday	4	3	2
Trinity VII ...	2	5	10
Trinity VIII	2	4	10
Trinity IX ...	2	7	11

HILTON

Sunday Services. During August there will be no Children's Service on Sunday mornings. Holy Communion at 9 a.m., and Evensong at 5.30 p.m. continue as usual.

Parish Registers

Collections

	£	s.	d.
Trinity VI ...	16	9	
Trinity VII ...	17	9	
Trinity VIII	11	6	
Feast Sunday	1	7	6

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