

## *From the Rector*

This month we have to announce a double change in the church's ministry in this parish. The Reverend Barry North has accepted a curacy in our neighbouring parish of SS Augustine, and will have started work there by the time this is in print. I shall be leaving the parish in October.

Barry North came to us in 1982 from theological College in Cambridge. During the two years that he has been with us he has contributed much to the life of the parish. Many young people have valued his support and counsel; and I know how many who have been involved in funerals conducted by Barry have appreciated his care. For the past year he has had special responsibility for St. John's Church at Walton, where his departure will leave a gap which is going to be difficult to fill. Barry has brought many skills to the parish, one of which has been apparent in the design and lay-out of this magazine. We wish him every success in his new work 'over the border'.

I have been ordained 35 years, and have now been in this parish for ten very happy years. Until three years ago, I took it for granted that I would remain here until retirement. Over the last three years, however, I have had some health problems; and, although I had no desire to go, I have had cause to consider whether it was right to make a move to lighter work.

But that is easier said than done. There are very few lighter jobs left in the Church of England; and there seemed little sense in leaving a parish where I had the support of fellow clergy and an active laity in order to move to a country place where I might have to work several linked parishes single handed, with little lay assistance.

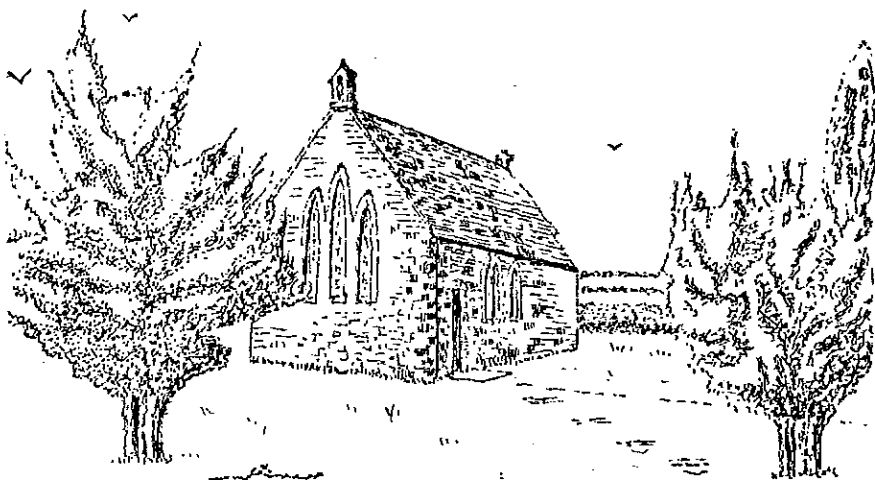
Recent events, however, have caused me to think again. The departure of the younger curate meant that my job here would be even more demanding; and I began to ask the question, 'Setting aside my own needs and preferences, what is best for the parish in the present situation?' As I reflected on this question, it became clear that a younger and fitter man was needed to take advantage of all the many opportunities which are opening up here. I have therefore decided that it is right for me to leave.

So what happens next? Representatives of the Parochial Church Council may now meet the Bishop and discuss with him the sort of man they would like to be their next Rector. The Bishop, who is patron of this living, will take into account the P.C.C.'s wishes as he looks around for a suitable man. When he thinks he has found one, he will invite him to visit the parish. The man invited will then come and 'case the joint' and try to 'sus out' the information he wants. If after doing that he decides the place is not for him, another man will have to be found to go through the same procedure. If he accepts, habemus papam! White smoke from the churchwarden's chimney! The parish has a new rector. And we all sincerely hope that that will happen without the inordinate delay that some parishes have experienced.

This is to assume that there is a clergyman who will be available to come to St. Thomas', Brampton. But why should we make this assumption? I once knew of an old priest who had a good reply to people who complained about their clergy. He would say quietly, 'yes, I know that the clergy aren't all they might be. But then, you see, we only have the laity to choose them from'. If priests are to be available to the church at large, laymen from individual churches must offer themselves for ordination. In my last parish we were producing on average one ordination candidate per year. Can anybody remember when we last produced an ordination candidate at St. Thomas'? Well, there has almost been one - I say almost, because Ian Pallett, who was ordained on July 1st this year to serve in the parish of Halesowen, lived in the parish for a few years in the 70's and dates his Christian conversion to his time here. But he is the only one I know about.

If we in this very well-favoured parish are not producing ordained men for the church, why on earth should we expect some other parish to provide a clergyman for us? Perhaps this is a time when we need to pray earnestly for more vocations to the church's Ministry. And there may be someone reading this who needs to ask himself (or herself, because there is a ministry of women too), 'Why should I not offer myself for ordination?'

*From the Rector* 



St. John's Church, Walton

18 '50

### ST. JOHN'S, WALTON - 'ON THE MAP'

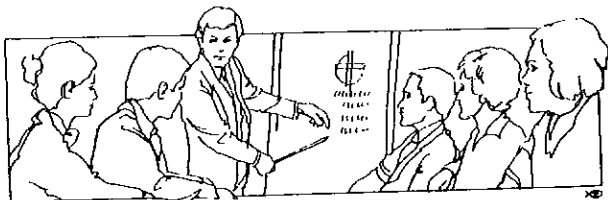
I think our Sweet Pea Festival this summer must have been a 'first' as far as St. Thomas's Parish was concerned.

Thanks to the generous gifts of the flowers and to the generosity and skill of the ladies of the Holymoorside Floral Art Class who so wonderfully decorated the church with the flowers, St. John's was really 'on the map' that weekend. We didn't keep a tally of how many came to marvel at the display and sample the refreshments provided, but our building fund was better off by about £260.00 as a result of the event.

What was really more important was that many people in the area 'found' our church for the first time and we were able to let all our visitors know about our plans for extending the church and the recently increased number of services held at St. John's - i.e. a Communion Service every Sunday with a service of Family Worship and a Mums and Toddlers service, each, monthly.

The Church extension, by the way, comprises a porch, toilet and small vestry and we are hopeful that, subject to the usual approvals, we shall now be able to make a start very soon.

K. Waddington.



# Church Re- Ordering

## EXPERIMENTAL NAVE ALTAR

Some years ago, the Worship Committee were asked to produce a re-ordering scheme for the Parish Church of Saint Thomas. The object was to discover what was considered necessary to project and enhance the worship of Saint Thomas' Church through the 20th century and beyond into the 21st century. Professor Murta of Sheffield University was commissioned to set down on paper and in model form his ideas to meet what he saw as our particular needs.

The Worship Committee and the P.C.C. received Professor Murta's proposals and it was decided that the time was not right to embark on wholesale changes because of, amongst other things, financial strictures. It was agreed to proceed step by step and the refurbishment of the west entrance, the leveling of the floor and the new carpet in church are examples of what has been achieved so far.

As the reader will I hope appreciate, these achievements are what may be cosmetic, good in themselves but do they really enhance our worship? The Worship Committee has now attempted to deal with probably the most difficult and sensitive area by following one of Professor Murta's proposals and producing an experimental nave altar.

Why is a nave altar considered necessary? The focal point of worship is immediately brought to the congregation so that priest and people are united together geographically as well as, we hope, spiritually. The nave altar may provide for a richer and warmer setting for the sharing of the sacrament when compared with the remoteness to the east end altar. The act of communion is a corporate celebration and we seem to lose 'togetherness' when we have to be divided from the rest of the congregation to receive the bread and wine at the east end.

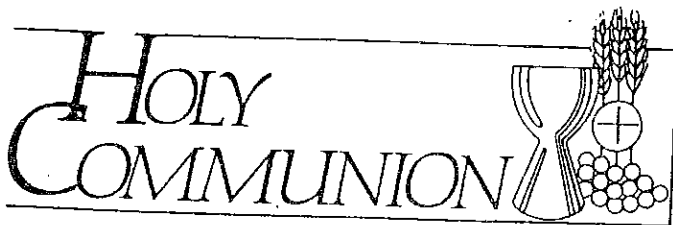
It much be emphasized that the present arrangement is experimental. It was built by the Worship Committee from existing materials with no financial cost to the P.C.C. and it must be appreciated that it is the principle which is being evaluated. The sanctuary area platform is somewhat rough and ready and, if it is decided after proper consultation, to go ahead with a permanent arrangement, the design and structure would need to be right, a setting to achieve enhancement of worship.

The Worship Committee wishes to gauge opinion from fellow worshippers on:- (a) the concept of a nave altar and (b) the style of the existing arrangement. To enable us to do this as objectively as possible, we must have the views of the congregation at large. Do not be afraid to praise it. Do not be afraid to openly criticise it. It is only by your response shall we know whether we are moving in the direction you would wish us to take. We are here to be shot at. Don't be afraid to pull the trigger!

J. BADGER.

Worship Committee Members: J. Badger, J. Lenthall, K. Morgan, D. Carrington, G. Smith, R. Stephens.

Co-opted Members: Mrs. Elgar, Mrs. George and K. Sharratt.



**TO EDITOR**

Dear Editor,

106 Walton Road

Church Disordering

Will you please forbear with me if I ask "How does it enrich the worship of the people who have worked so hard and given so generously, past and present, to create a sanctuary that is no longer used for Communion?"

Many older people have spoken to me about how upset they are at the change. I can hear them, will anyone else listen?

Although I am a lone voice with little influence, I have come to love the Sanctuary and the blessed peace it brings when I receive Communion at the altar. I know we live in a changing world, but I would like to grow in grace, and accept the Communion with peace in my heart and good will towards all men. That peace and good will is in danger under the present changes.

May I remind you of Psalm 150 - "O Praise God in his Sanctuary."

Elizabeth Cayton.



# WHEN IT'S YOU OR NOBODY

We are all of us in daily contact with people who never go near a church and are hardly likely to hear the Gospel preached.

If they are to hear about Jesus, it must come from us!

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I am terrified that we are looking to people like Billy Graham and Luis Palau to do evangelism at long range for us. It won't work! Unless rank-and-file Christians are getting alongside their friends, neighbours and colleagues, nothing significant will happen in the great stadium meetings. The Spirit's word to us is 'go' and 'stay near'. All dimensions of evangelism depend on personal obedience to the Spirit's call.

— GAVIN REID

*National Director of Mission England*

## YES, MINISTER

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Over the country as a whole the Church of England now has an average of one minister for each 4,244 population.

The extremes are rural Hereford diocese where the ratio is 1 per 2,000 and urban Birmingham with 1 for each 6,000.

All these figures include licensed lay workers and deaconesses as well as parochial clergymen.

— CHURCH INFORMATION OFFICE

## NEW READER FOR ST. THOMAS'

Harold Clarke was licensed as Reader by the Bishop of Derby at a service in the Cathedral on June 16th. He now joins the other two readers (Sylvia Scott and Gill Watts-Jones) in a lay team of people who are authorised to officiate and to preach in church.

Harold, 56, is a fitter at Markham's, where he has worked continuously since leaving school at the age of 15. 'I left school on the Friday, and began at work on Monday morning!' said Harold.

In his youth he was a keen cyclist, sometimes cycling 200 miles in a day. 'At Easter I used to cycle with my friend to Land's End and back, taking six days for the journey', said Harold. Now he does less cycling, but enjoys walking in the country and bird-watching. Says Harold, 'I think that my faith is enabling me to see beauty in nature in a way that I never did before.'

At St. Thomas' church Harold's skills as a fitter have been put to good use in repairing and maintaining the carillon - the peal of bells operated from a keyboard. For some time he has been the church's 'man on duty' at evening service; and from now on he will be able to lead the service.

At work Harold is a member of the works Christian Fellowship. How do his workmates feel about his new role in the church? 'I keep fairly quiet about it', says Harold, 'There have been a few friendly comments written on the wall! Everyone is very good about it.'