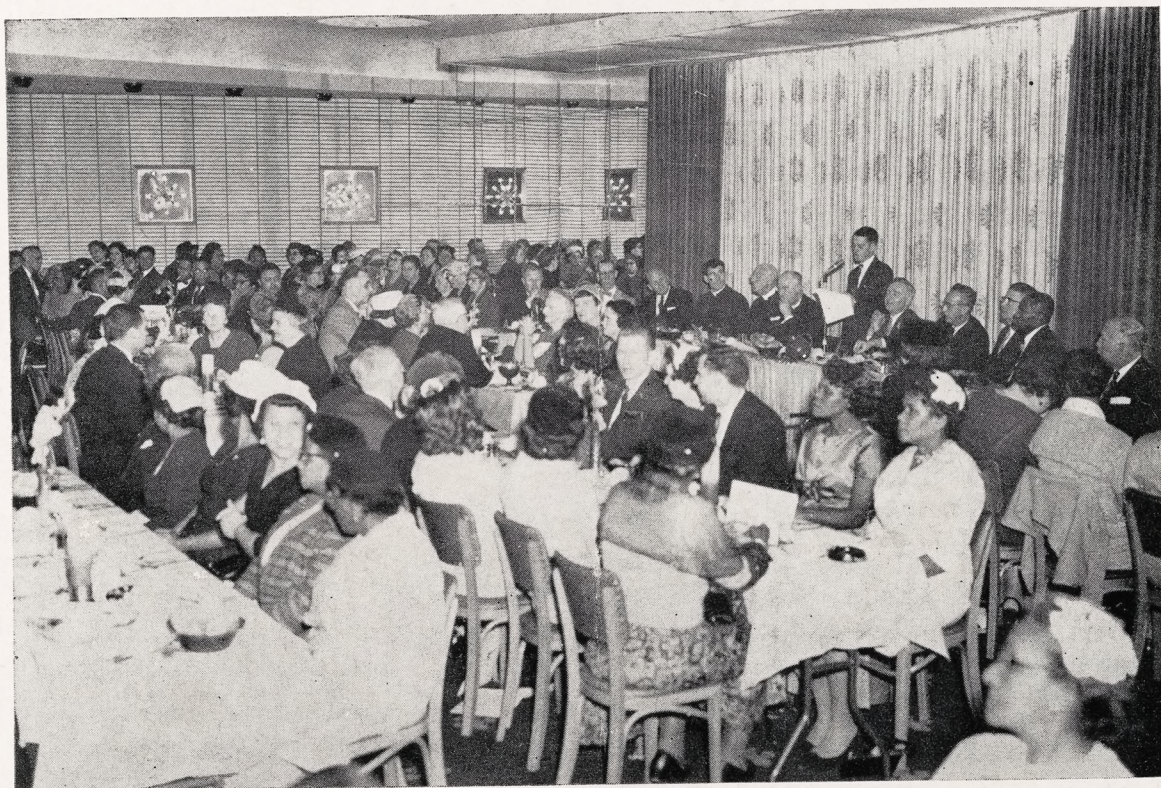


The **+** WITNESS

APRIL 6, 1961

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HISTORIC GRACE CHURCH, JAMAICA, LONG ISLAND

The Stewardship Dinner Demonstrates the Inter-Racial
Character of the Parish (Story on Page Four)

APPEAL TO THE U.N. --- ACTION URGENT

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In Leading Churches

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THE WITNESS is published weekly from
September 15th to June 15th inclusive, with
the exception of one week in January and
bi-weekly from June 15th to September 15th
by the Episcopal Church Publishing Co. on
behalf of the Witness Advisory Board.



The subscription price is \$4.00 a year; in
bundles for sale in parishes the magazine sells
for 10c a copy, we will bill quarterly at 7c a
copy. Entered as Second Class Matter, August
5, 1948, at the Post Office at Tunkhannock,
Pa., under the act of March 3, 1879.

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Holy Days: Holy Communion, 12:15
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Sunday Services: 8 and 9:30 a.m., Holy
Communion; 11, Morning Prayer and
Sermon; 4 p.m., Service in French;
7:30, Evening Prayer.

Editorial and Publication Office, Eaton Road, Tunkhannock, Pa.

Story of the Week

Elimination of Discrimination Sought by Church Agency

★ A committee to study means of eliminating discrimination against some foreign delegates to the United Nations and diplomatic representatives in Washington was authorized by the general committee of the National Council of Churches' department of international affairs.

Also discussed were UN draft covenants on human rights and a proposed meeting of leaders with President Kennedy to assure him of the council's "strong support."

Presiding Bishop Arthur Lichtenberger, council vice-chairman of the international affairs department, called attention to the discrimination problems, noting that "the main concern now felt is with the subject of housing for UN delegates."

The study committee will "explore further the problems relating to hospitality for UN personnel and diplomatic representatives in Washington and what is being done by governmental and private agencies."

The Protestant Council of New York recently asked pastors of some 200 Manhattan churches to take every possible measure to correct discriminatory practices against African delegates seeking housing within proximity of UN headquarters.

The general committee voted

to recommend that council officers and leaders of member denominations visit President Kennedy. Herman Reissig, a member of the United Church of Christ's council for social action, pointed out that "we have a President whose foreign policies . . . run parallel, in quite impressive fashion, to positions of many of the National Council's member Churches and to positions of the National Council itself."

Dominique Micheli of Geneva, secretary of the New York office of the commission of the Churches on international affairs, reported on discussions at the UN on human rights draft covenants centering on the wording which would safeguard the right to change one's religion or beliefs. In deference to Moslem delegates the word "change" was replaced in a compromise version approved by the UN group which reads ". . . everyone has the right to choose or to adopt his religion or belief."

Mr. Micheli said that in the opinion of the Christian Churches the compromise did not weaken materially the sense of the draft.

Reporting on President Kennedy's peace corps, Kenneth L. Maxwell, executive director of the international affairs department, stressed that

Churches, individually and collectively, pioneered in overseas youth service. Mentioning particularly the ecumenical summer work camps which will be held this year in 37 areas and countries, he said that on the basis of this experience the department had forwarded to Washington some suggested guiding principles for the peace corps.

A telegram to UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld expressing "support for your loyal and devoted efforts in the service of peace" was sent by the department.

RELIGIOUS GIVING IN 1960 REACHED \$4.18 BILLION

★ Total religious giving in 1960 for all faiths reached an estimated \$4.18 billion — compared with \$3.9 billion the previous year — the American association of fund-raising counsel announced.

The association, which organizes, directs and advises drives to raise funds, said the religious figure amounted to about 51 per cent of the \$8.2 billion grand total of philanthropic giving last year.

It said the remainder was divided among education, 16 per cent; welfare, 15; health, 12; foundations, 4; and others, 2.

The counsel also said that churches, synagogues and temples in this country have property and endowment valued at \$15 billion.

Historic Grace Church, Jamaica Pioneers in Integration

★ It began about 1945. Not suddenly, but gradually as clouds gather on a clear horizon. First silver and white they become grey and ominous as they spread and swell. Possible omens of a storm.

As unpredictable as the clouds was this invasion; as unexpected. It came from Harlem but it was not started there — though eventually it must have come. From Harlem, where Negroes and West Indians were huddled together in once-fashionable brown stone houses. Horded in tenements that years ago were apartments designed for a few families.

The darker skinned people yearned for room to breathe, room to sleep, room to walk and to play. They yearned for decency, for more than a glimpse of the blue sky, for grass and trees; perhaps even flowers.

Restless and unhappy, these crushed-in masses were hungry for freedom. Hungry for freedom from a new kind of slavery; their masters the greedy landlords.

Eventually the pressure would have been too great, but the Harlemites did not initiate the pilgrimage to wider places. Cynical fate decreed that it should be a white man. A white man who, in a moment of spite, contrived to sell his house to a Negro from Harlem. The result was what he had craftily schemed.

In a pleasant, quiet neighborhood of South Jamaica panic ensued. A panic that real estate dealers were quick to recognize; scenting profit. They swarmed in, preying on the fears of the whites who were alarmed lest property values

should decline. They did, so the pale people took what they could get before it would be worse. The cloud, the dark cloud was fast approaching.

The dealers hurried to Harlem. "See what you can get", they cried to receptive ears. "We offer you room; room for your children to run. Room to sleep, to breathe." They doubled their prices as their clients listened and rapidly increased.

In Jamaica, Addisleigh Park with its gracious homes, wide lawns and trees — yes real trees, not telephone poles on drab narrow streets — soon yielded. The more prosperous of darker hue came; grateful for the opportunity. They saw to it that the neighborhood remained as lovely as before.

Soon others moved into more modest dwellings that had been deserted by the fleeing whites. Few of lighter skin remained in South Jamaica.

The cloud brought many from the British islands to the south where they had learned self-respect. Men and women of education and culture. Many were Anglicans. They sought out a Church, a Church where they could feel at home as they had in their islands. Some had come from another Jamaica; this new one was different; a busy, bustling community. Part of the greater city of New York.

They Found a Church

It seemed strange. But in its heart they found a Gothic building, topped by a slender spire and a cross, a church. It was surrounded by a whole block of lawn and trees. Here were graves with ancient, dignified stones. On them were



GRACE CHURCH, with a whole block of lawn
and trees and graves of famous pioneers

carved names famous in the city's history; Cranes, Suydams, Ven Renssalears — and Kings without number. Most noted of them all was Rufus King, close friend of Washington, signer of the Declaration of Independence, ambassador to the court of St. James. Warden, too, of this the oldest Episcopal parish on Long Island and second only to Trinity Parish, New York City, in the entire state.

Filled with awe the newcomers looked on this, looked on Grace Church founded more than two and a half centuries ago by missionary-minded people in London. Would they, some of them descendants of the slaves of the founders of this church, be welcome?

They were. They found the service to their liking. This they had been accustomed to in their island homes where they shared the churches with the whites. Yes, the majority of the congregation welcomed them, though oft-times with trepidation for they knew not what the cloud, the dark cloud portended economically as it hovered over South Jamaica. It was not easy as increasingly men and women and children came from congested Harlem. And the tocsin sounded by the Supreme Court's decision spread, inevitably, alarm and unrest through the country. But New York was not another Little Rock and those familiar with the history of Grace Church reminded themselves of how the Londoners in 1702 looked upon the people of Jamaica, who beseeched them for a ministry, as little better than uncouth folk.

So these more modern "uncouth" folk came. They were different, to be sure, but the rector, as he had often said, was color-blind. All people of whatever race or shade were welcome as the children of God — or the Incarnation was a

mockery. Could one betray the Master's words that this should be "A house of prayer for all people"?

Difficulties

Certainly there were difficulties. How could it be otherwise? Readjustment is never easy, however one may strive to accept it. Quite understandably qualm and apprehension seized some of the old-times who had always been used to it as their church. Was it, the church of Rufus King, of Samuel Seabury, once rector but later to be the first bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States, was this to be taken over by an alien race, by people of a different culture?

They were sincere, but their consciences troubled them. What, what was Grace Church coming to? It was no longer the same; it was no longer theirs. They were not selfish; they were distressed. But some failed to ask, some few, "Is it thy will, my God?"

A tiny minority of the vestry failed to ask this question. They sought someone to blame for this seeming disaster, this debacle. And, as always occurs, some scapegoat must be found. Obviously it was the rector. Surely he had gone out of his way to welcome these people. To encourage the influx of those who, in the minds of a small number, were "inferior". At each vestry meeting the dissidents cried out, "Something must be done to stop this." But they had no answer and there was no answer. How could there be, or should there be, in a church which presumed to call itself Christian?

The rector suggested the vestry confer with the bishop, who quickly quelled the resentment of the few. He was proud of Grace Church, he said, proud that it was one of the sparse parishes that was accomplishing integration. Any-

thing else would be disloyalty to the Master.

The disaffected ones became less vocal. Surely they wanted to be Christians but as surely they were unhappy and dismayed about what they knew in their heart of hearts Christ demanded. So it has always been. They were distressed at what social change — could it be that God was involved? — had brought to pass.

So it came to pass that the congregation gracefully accepted the growing number of darker-skinned folk who, decorous and courteous in behaviour, took their places in the pews. The great majority of the long-time members could accept communal worship. Deep down they realized this was God's house, not theirs, where they and those who had come long before them prayed and gave praise.

But mingling in social groups was another matter. Some of the church societies remained white, finding their congeniality in those whom they would, perhaps only because of proximity, naturally associate with. It is quite usual for persons to relate to those who have their common interests and friends.

All Sorts and Conditions

But it was not so with all. Strikingly The Ladies Missionary Aid Society, the oldest women's group devoted to working for missions in the history of the Episcopal Church, welcomed the newcomers. The reason was obvious; they were deeply concerned in their work with all sorts and conditions of people. They found those of another race to be friendly and dedicated; willing to work hard for the spread of Christ's kingdom throughout the world. Before long a West Indian woman of talent became president of the Society, a part of the organization known as the Episcopal Church Women. And more than half of the members were not of the white race.

The Men's Club had a similar record. Twice they elected non-whites as presidents. One of the club's achievements was to plan and conduct an all-parish picnic where everyone mingled happily: more and more came.

Finally, after a few desperate attempts of the die-hards to prevent it, two Negroes were elected to the vestry. Not because they were of a minority race but because they were men of exceptional ability and character. It is noteworthy that had the Negroes chosen to organize they could have long before elected men of their race to the vestry. But they quietly remained aloof.

By and large an equilibrium was achieved with mutual toleration and respect. Actually, though the parish by 1960 had become about 50% non-white, both the Negroes and whites hoped a plateau had been reached. Should it become all-Negro, which was very unlikely, it would no longer be an integrated church and the values, so hardly won, would be lost.

The Young People

The picture was not all bright, as anyone who has experienced problems of integration can testify. It is best to be frank. There have been thrilling gains, but there have been losses as well. Perhaps the most serious of the latter has been in the young peoples groups; those of high school age and over. Groups of the same sex have been unaffected, but those in which some social relationship is inevitable have presented difficulties.

Surely the problem is understandable to all of us, of whatever cultural, economic or racial group. We tend to associate with those who have the same tastes and concerns as our own. It would be idle to deny that we have not suffered. The parish had been noted for its outstand-

ing youth activities. Now gone are the days when boy met girl in the congenial atmosphere of the parish house and where many a romance blossomed into marriage. Now teen-agers sought the companionship of those with whom they have much socially in common.

What all want — be they white, black, brown or yellow — is to somehow "belong". It is sometimes difficult for the members of a majority group, as the whites are in this country, to understand or, rather, to feel this. They simply take it for granted, for it has never been denied them. They do not experience the frustrations that must come to those in a minority. Doors are not closed to the whites as they are to others.

What of the Future?

The future in an integrated church such as Grace? It will no doubt be influenced by what happens in this seething world. We can only say that we have had a try at fellowship and found it good. Certainly and above all in worship, where the family sense has been unremittingly emphasized and, we like to believe, to a large extent realized. We like to think, that we have sensed Christ in the heart of the man or woman sitting in the pew next to us or kneeling with us at the altar rail.

What has been accomplished here is only unique for the time being. Eventually it is a problem that every body of professed Christians will have to face. All we can say is that we have endeavored and in some small measure succeeded in being true to Christ's will as we see it and to the dictates of our National Church. And we can take some satisfaction that the issue has not been dodged.

That satisfaction will only be greatened as our members of Christ's family can come to

have justifiable pride in what has happened, even though he or she would not have chosen it to be so. That will be an attainment that merits commendation. For that we must wait, but still, still we catch glimpses of gold on what was once a dark cloud.

MORE SCROLLS FOUND NEAR DEAD SEA

★ An amateur archeologist has discovered a new hoard of Dead Sea scrolls that scholars believe may surpass in importance anything uncovered so far in Israel and Jordan relating to the period of Simon Bar-Kochba, leader of the last Jewish revolt against the Romans in the second century.

This was the word flashed by Professor Yigael Yadin, Israeli archeologist, from the almost inaccessible cave area near the Dead Sea where the first scrolls were found in the late 1940's and early 1950's.

He said the finds included 70 fragile documents which had not yet been unrolled, metal tools, coins and dozens of skeletons of men, women and children, possibly members of numerous Jewish sects who are thought to have sought escape from Roman domination only to meet a tragic end.

The discovery was made by the amateur archeologist when he stumbled on a rock, knocking it aside to reveal a long reed-like sheath in which the papyrus documents were stored.

The amateur was among 160 scholars, soldiers and volunteers from Kibbutz settlements in Israel who set out under Professor Yadin on a new expedition for a more thorough exploration of the Judean desert area near the Dead Sea. Among them were a Greek Orthodox monk, a Japanese student at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and a young Danish Protestant farmer.

What SHOULD The Church Be Doing?

ABOUT THE MORAL CRISIS FACING HER PEOPLE

By John M. Gessell

Rector, Grace Church, Salem, Mass.

WE ARE living in the twilight of a dying culture. The familiar landmarks and signposts have gone or are becoming hazy in the gloom. Our uncertainty is measured not only by the coming darkness but by the inability to guess with any accuracy what a new day will show. We face not a little terror and we need, especially now, some means to find our way even in darkness and uncertainty.

Christians may find their way, even though painfully, in a time of cultural change. The crises and dilemmas which change brings, if we have the courage to face into them, can become the occasions for the erecting of new signposts. These can become the new and visible signposts in a darkening world which point along the way of faith. The way in which we respond to points of crisis, the way in which we choose and the decisions we make, all reveal the nature of our faith commitment. As Christians, we are under judgment at the points of crisis in our lives, at the moments of decision.

The crisis of the breakup of old patterns of culture does not necessarily signal the end of civilization. On the other hand, the Church has passed through numberless times of crisis and the breakup and disappearance of numerous civilizations. What is true today is that we live in a time of revolution in which the familiar forms and structures are changing and disappearing more rapidly than ever before, perhaps too

FAITH IS NOT RIGHT BELIEF. FAITH IS TRUST, LOYALTY AND COMMITMENT. OUT OF THIS COMES THE POWER FOR MORAL DECISION, THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS FOR SINFUL ACTION, AND THE GRACE TO BECOME NEW PERSONS IN CHRIST

rapidly to keep up with. Some of us are bewildered; some lose all moral sense and say "what's the use"; all of us need to reexamine carefully the moral demands and dilemmas in our lives. We face today a serious moral crisis.

Shape of the Moral Crisis

THAT we face a moral crisis can scarcely be doubted. All signs point to it. Every daily paper records it. No one person is at fault, and yet everyone is seriously under condemnation. In general, it is true that this particular generation of men has lost its grip on the fundamental root of moral decisiveness. We are a wicked and adulterous generation precisely because we have learned to choose on the basis of whimsy rather than out of response to the unchanging love and loyalty of God as shown in Jesus Christ. Christian responsibility to the Lord, to the Son of God, has been replaced by expediency and a craven fear of doing what is difficult or doing what is different.

We can easily observe the apparent absence of any coherent basis upon which people can generally make responsible use of power and of things, or by which they can evaluate their relationships to other people. We see the widespread indifference to corruption in state and local politics. There is resistance to attempts to root out the sources of crime, especially those which seek and gain protection of civic officials.

We continue to note that those who wish to

impose patterns of segregation in race relations, and those who wish to play labor and management against each other to the hurt of the consumer have their way. There is no easy manner in which the average person can touch the centers of power and decision to make an effective protest or to assist in the dynamics of public assent. We live in a time when many would prefer not to accept or to assume responsibility for the welfare of the community, so long as their own comfort and security go unchallenged.

Typical Responses to the Moral Crisis

MAN responds in one way to his moral dilemma by saying "I don't agree, it isn't so", or "I don't care, it is not my responsibility". This is to abjure the command to love. At this point John Donne's words return to haunt us and to remind us of a different time. "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main . . . any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never to send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee."

Another way we respond to the crisis is to demand a rule book for safety. This is to jettison our freedom. The fundamental problem in the moral crisis of our time is not simply that Christians should be good people living up to some standard or code of conduct. So far as I know there is no Christian norm of behavior. The fundamental problem in the moral crisis is a dilemma that stems out of our rootlessness, out of our lack of committedness, out of our unwillingness to give ultimate loyalty to God who is utterly loyal. The Christian's behavior is never a matter of an abstract code. It is always and precisely, no more and no less, a matter of an absolute commitment to the Holy God who speaks to us the word by which we live. The last (not the first) baptismal condition is "Wilt thou keep God's holy will and commandments . . . all the days of thy life?" We are confronted here not by the rule book to be applied, but by the living command of a living God in every situation of choice and decision. For this reason we are under judgment of the holy God, not a series of rules. We cannot meet the moral crisis by the application of any rule or by adopting a code of behavior.

The Ethics of the Son of God

IN THESE partial, evasive and twisted responses to the crises demanding moral decision, we loose our grasp on the essential dimensions of ethical action — love and freedom.

There can be no responsible moral decision without freedom, and there can be no testing of moral adequacy save by the judgment of divine love. Indifference and the rule book destroy any moral climate.

Contrary to average opinion, Christian ethics as an answer to the moral crisis and to the moral dilemma, is understood in the Biblical tradition as the ethics of commitment and responsibility. For Christians this can be summed up as the ethics of the Son of God, or the sons of God, for our Lord's way is our way by adoption and grace. The loyalty of the sons of God is symbolized by the Gospel for Palm Sunday. This means that every situation is, in a sense, new and novel so that no precedents apply save that of loyal response to God in that situation. It led our Lord to the Cross. There are no rules, no code books, no guarantees.

This may be slight solace to those who seek an easy answer. But it is the basis of our Christian freedom, the possibility that we be free moral agents. The ground of such ethical action of response is the faith commitment made by the Christian and maintained by the nurturing power of the Holy Spirit in the Christian community. There is no such thing as "just being a good man" without any faith commitment. There is no possibility of facing any moral crisis without a previous faith commitment, a promise made without side agreements or rear exits.

The Biblical nature of this ethics of response as the answer to the moral crisis is symbolized in the Covenant, the Testament. God made a Covenant with his people. The Old and New Testaments are records of this. God's dependable action, by which his people are brought into a saving relationship with him, is the ground of responsible moral action. Thus we can see that the root of the present moral dilemma is the uncovenanted lives we are determined to lead. We are unwilling to be committed.

The Structure of Moral Decision

THE nature of creative moral action in ultimate loyalty through commitment to the Lord of our lives. For Christians this is Jesus Christ as Son of God and Saviour. As the late Alexander Miller pointed out last year in *Christianity and Crisis*, "the nature of Christian ethics has been rightly identified (as the ethics of response). In this area as elsewhere, biblical thought has no kind of continuity with idealism and naturalism. In terms of covenant and community it binds us to an understanding of life

and conduct that derives directly from that active and incarnate love whereby God gathers a people for himself and by that same love enmeshes them in a profound mutuality of obligation that is for pure love's sake."

Man lives by his loyalties, not his reason. And the Christian's loyalty is absolutely to the God who is utterly loyal, and to his demands.

Christian commitment is the basis for all action and decision. This commitment arises out of the struggle between wanting to please self and wanting to please others. Both the action which is undertaken to satisfy merely personal desires (even those lofty ones of prudence and service) and the action undertaken to satisfy others (even charity and concern for others, not to mention winning the approval of others), both of these are sub-Christian and ultimately frustrating. Out of this purely human tension,

however, arises the demands of God to whom we are sworn to be faithful. These demands for moral decision and action arise as concrete occasions, not as ideals or principles. Faith is not right belief. Faith is trust, loyalty and commitment. Out of this comes the power for moral decision, the power of forgiveness for sinful action, and the grace to become new persons in Christ.

It is my own conviction and I believe that of Biblical Christianity, that the renewal of life lies directly at this point where decision is the issue. It is also right here that the renewal of the Church may be seen to lie. For as the Church itself forgoes worldly advantage and assumes again its unique task of being God's people, it will find itself empowered anew to speak prophetically for God and to offer men the power of grace through sacrament and the word, that they may truly be the sons of God.

THE BASIS OF TRUE SECURITY

OUR TURNING TO GOD MUST BE A
CONTINUOUS PROCESS, A RELATION-
SHIP WHICH GROWS THROUGHOUT
THE YEARS OF OUR LIVES

By Terence J. Finlay

Rector of St. Bartholomew's, New York

LAST week among my mail, and perhaps among yours, was a folder, with the heading, "Have you examined your securities lately?" This question provides an introduction to our thoughts with regard to the true basis of our security, taking as our text Jesus' words to his disciples:

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Like a brilliant ray of light in the darkness comes these words. I am sure that again and again we have found them to be words of comfort and assurance in times of our individual trouble. Let us listen once again to them: "Let not your heart be troubled." We may well ask, "Why not?" because there is hardly a person who is fortunate enough to go through life without experiencing individual difficulties, without bearing the burden of grief or sorrow or being suddenly confronted with disaster.

Why not, when we look out over the world scene and realize the ever-present danger of the destructive powers that could be let loose among us by the willful acts of sinful men. Many of us feel that there is little hope in being told that we should not be troubled; and yet, if we were to read these words for the first time, we would find in them the force of an unexpected discovery. They have become so familiar to our ears that they have lost their meaning. But when they were first uttered by our Lord to a troubled and frightened group of his followers in the upper room at Jerusalem, he gave them hope and assurance, some message of comfort, that would strengthen their faith for the disasters that were suddenly to overtake him and encompass them. He said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." They had been brought up to believe in God. They had been with Jesus now for almost three

years; and they were to believe in him also as a revelation of God. This was to give them comfort; to give them a sense of personal and corporate security.

Word of the Hour

ONCE having uttered this word "security," we realize that it is the predominant word which rings upon our ears through the press, over television, by means of the radio, and through the addresses of many of our public people. "Security" is the word of the hour. We want family security, social security, national security. We want security against poverty, sickness, unemployment, old age, war — and the list is endless. Does it not seem strange to you that in this twentieth century, when mankind has reached new heights of inventiveness and productivity; when in this North American hemisphere we have more things to give us comfort and add to the pleasure of living than we have ever known before, above them all comes this word "security"?

Where may we find the basis of true security? The Christian looks out at his world and lists his securities in a different terminology. We state them in a profession of our faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed. We have echoed the words of our Lord, for we have stated that we believe in God and we believe in Jesus Christ. I take it that we mean what we say when we repeat the Apostles' Creed, when we pray, and when we sing our hymns. Do we really mean all our profession of faith, or is it merely some pious mumbo-jumbo that we have invented to give us a sense of security? I know that you would answer, "No; a thousand times no. This is our faith. This is the rock upon which we build, and we know that though the storms break upon it—it will endure." We believe in a God who is revealed to us as compassionate and tender and forgiving. We believe that our God is not the God of the dead but of the living; not the God that was but the God that is and is to be. This is our security.

We are not making any new discovery, for men and women down through the ages have listed this as their security. Again and again we find comfort in our study of God's words. There are many little handbooks published by well-meaning men and women to give us a lift. They may serve as aids, but the great textbook is the book used in every service of the church, the Bible.

From the book of books, we have a wonderful

illustration of God's revelation to man. The people of Israel had been led out of bondage in Egypt under their great leader, Moses. After forty years of wandering in the wilderness, they have been brought in sight of the promised land, which lies on the other side of the river Jordan. Scouts, who are sent ahead to ascertain the nature of the country, return with the news that it is indeed a land of promise, flowing with milk and honey, but that the people who live there are like giants and dwell in fortified cities. When the report is received, the people are discouraged, for it would seem as if all their privations have been for nothing.

God of our Fathers

BUT as we read the Scriptures, we note that God never leaves his people alone. In this case, he speaks to them through a young man who has had very little experience of leadership, who has been left in command after the death of Moses, a young soldier named Joshua. When you hear Joshua speaking, it is not his youthful inexperience, but it is God speaking through a consecrated, devoted young man. Do you remember what Joshua says: "Be strong, and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." This is what the people needed — the reminder to look to the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. This is the God who is still with them; he has not deserted or left them; and he will be with them, to bring them into their promised land.

We may not boast of the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, but we can boast of the God of the Pilgrim fathers, the God of the early settlers in Virginia, the God of the men and women who hewed a new home for themselves in an unknown country, the God of a people who believe that it is not enough to have material comforts but a people who believe that one must have communication with God. A few days after Easter, when I visited Jamestown, I was thrilled to find that in the center of the Stockade was the house of God. We may turn to the God of our fathers to find strength, to find a true basis for security.

Sometimes I am afraid that, though we have a wonderful religion, for some of us it is merely hearsay; and hearsay religion is never good enough in the time of testing. It must be a personal, individual experience of our relationship to God. That is why, in our Prayer Book, we say the Apostles Creed in Morning and Evening

Prayer, and the Nicene Creed at every celebration of the Holy Communion. The Creed always begins with the first person singular: "I believe." As we say it, we are thrilled with the realization that it has been said by Christians from the days of our Lord's disciples up to this very moment.

God Still Reigns

WE DO not believe for one moment that, because we have advanced scientifically, the one who brought the world into being had abdicated and left his world to be run by a lot of clever human beings as they wish. I believe that God still reigns, and that he is still calling ordinary men and women, like those whom he made his spokesmen, to say a word for the Lord in season and out of season; to try to lead those who are perplexed and troubled to the source of true security; to try to look out at our troubled international problems and remain assured that, if we trust in God, he will work his purposes out. It may not be just as we wish it, because we are not omnipotent; we do not know what is best for us. Sometimes it is in times of testing that man does arrive at his true worth. It is not enough to turn to God just in a moment of crisis. Our turning to God must be a continuous process, a relationship which has grown up within us since we were baptized in his name, since we made a profession of faith at our confirmation.

We are not to be like the two characters, whom Maxwell Anderson portrayed for us in "High Tor." When Biggs and Skimmerhorn find themselves in grave danger, Biggs says to the other: "Do you know any prayers?" And Skimmerhorn answers, "I know one."

"Say it, will you?"

"Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,

"Bless the bed that I lie on."

Biggs replied, "That's not much good, that one."

Skimmerhorn says, "It's the only one I know. I don't know how to pray."

Suddenly there comes a loud crash, and we find Biggs down on his knees, pleading, "O God, I never did this before, and I don't know how. But keep me safe here and I will be a better man. I will put candles on the altar, yes, and I'll get that Spring Valley church fixed up — the one that's falling down. I can do a lot for you if you'll let me live."

Maxwell Anderson has put it rather crudely, but are we not sometimes like this man? We cannot bargain with God. We cannot find our

security in just a moment of crisis. It has to be built up. That is why we say, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." That is why we say, "Let there be no season in our church-going."

We must keep our lines of communication open; we are not to let ourselves be unduly troubled or overly anxious, for we believe in God as revealed to us in all his glory by Jesus Christ, our Lord, our Redeemer, our Saviour, and our Friend.

This is true security.

Don Large

In the Market Place

A CRITIC of our Church once made the tart observation that Episcopalians often looked and acted like people who had been starched and ironed before they were washed. God alone knows how many uncounted souls have left the Church unentered because they were weary of seeing too many parishes supporting a status quo which had the dead hand of the past pressing down heavily upon it.

This understandable reaction reminds one of the unwittingly humorous sign which swings outside a certain home for elderly people. It reads, "For the Sick and Tired of the Episcopal Church."

Which is why I am always distressed at the sight of Victorian stuffiness in ecclesiastical circles—and why I am equally excited whenever I see the Church moving out to minister to souls where they live and at the level of their needs.

As an example of the latter, it's truly heart-warming to read the news about a week-long mission conducted recently on the campus of Lehigh University by one of our Episcopal priests, the Reverend Malcolm Boyd. It seems that one evening, after the night's preaching had been completed, several members of the mission's collegiate congregation invited Fr. Boyd and the Dean of the Bethlehem, Pa., Cathedral to a local tavern where a jazz concert was in progress.

"When we arrived," says Malcolm Boyd, "people were all drinking beer, and we had a couple ourselves. And the students came over to

our table for consultations. Actually I heard, in an informal way, probably a half dozen confessions while the jazz was going on."

Learning subsequently of the controversy which his actions had stirred up, Fr. Boyd told reporters, "People needed to speak and to be heard. They needed to have layer after layer of guilt taken away. They were persons who do not attend church . . . We need to accept people as they are, not as we wish they were. Our Lord was a friend to the winebibbers and publicans of his time. He was opposed and crucified by the Pharisees, the self-righteous people who wished to retain religion within narrow limits, not allowing it to be related to life."

Well, as Malcolm Boyd has been undoubtedly reminded by the number of brickbats he received, living out the commands of the gospel in the marketplace is a humbling business. It sometimes takes you into embarrassing places

and unpopular situations. And it can't afford the price of pride or the comfort of standing on one's dignity.

But if the Lord's work is to get itself done in these crucial times, the Church dare not settle for the false security of second best. There's no room left for the drawing aside of her skirts. She must seek, not an incompetent exclusiveness, but rather an inclusive excellence.

The president of the Carnegie Foundation, John W. Gardner, has put the problem most succinctly: "An excellent plumber is infinitely more admirable than an incompetent philosopher. The society which scorns excellence in plumbing because plumbing is a humble activity will have neither good plumbing nor good philosophy. Neither its pipes nor its theories will hold water."

So a toast to you, Fr. Boyd, even if it has to be only in beer. And may your ministry plumb new depths of success in the pubs of the publicans!

MOBILIZATION AT THE PARISH LEVEL

THROUGH REGULAR WEEKLY MEETINGS WHEN THE PARISH MEETS AS A WHOLE TO DISCUSS ITS COMMON LIFE AND WORK

By Warren H. McKenna

Rector of St. John's, Holbrook, Mass.

A FEW days ago the retiring president of the New York City's Protestant Council was reported to have said that Protestantism was "through and rightly" if it did not begin to challenge the nation to something better than a "fat, fatuous, fumbling contentment."

Somewhat earlier Bishop Pike warned us that the Church itself was in retreat. More recently Malcolm Boyd has suggested (Witness 1/23) that much of our Christianity is a "doll house kind of vulgarized pietism —", and that the Church should be dirtying its hands — and "preparing itself for the breaking of its bones and the spilling of its blood".

These three strictures on the Church readily

come to mind. I've probably overlooked a dozen more, so fast and furious do they appear in print these days. While we are agreeing with all such criticism let us note that it comes mostly from clergy, professional Christians, or those in some official capacity.

In striking contrast is the silence of the rank and file. By and large it is not the laity who articulate the serious weaknesses of the Church. Most of the time they do little more than give a sympathetic ear. The significance of this is apparent when we recall that it is the lay person in the average church who is supposed to redeem the situation. The Church mili-

(Continued on Page Fourteen)

Talking It Over

By W. B. Spofford Sr.

COMMUNITY OF FEAR is a pamphlet published by the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, set up by the Fund for the Republic. Authors are Prof. Harrison Brown, professor of geochemistry at California Institute of Technology, and James Real, a business man. Their concluding words are:

"The arms race, already almost incomprehensible in its capacity for mass annihilation, will be elaborated with new elements—chemical, biological, psychological—until the arsenals are packed with devices to destroy all the peoples of the world many times over. Yet in the long run the grisly 'race' can produce no winner. In any future war the consolation prizes can only be surrender, stalemate, or death."

This pamphlet will be reprinted in its entirety in several issues of The Witness, commencing next week. Prof. Brown and Mr. Real, in a note of explanation, say: "We present many problems, but no solutions."

But they also say toward the end: "It is also possible that war will become obsolete prior to the ultimate stalemate, because man might take it upon himself to eliminate it from his culture."

To this end there is presently being circulated for signatures an appeal, addressed to the United Nations and to all nations in the world. It is printed in the next column, so that it can be signed with your name and address, clipped and mailed to:

Dr. Linus Pauling

3500 Fairpoint St.

Pasadena, California.

The suggestion is further made that, in sending your signature, you ask Dr. Pauling to send you one or more of the appeals so that you can solicit signatures from others. Incidentally the back of the appeal gives the names of distinguished people throughout the world who have

already signed the appeal—with very few Episcopalians, or any other churchmen for that matter, on the list, although there are notable exceptions.

AN APPEAL TO STOP THE SPREAD OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

To the United Nations and to all nations in the world:

We, the men and women whose names are signed below, believe that stockpiles of nuclear weapons should not be allowed to spread to any more nations or groups of nations.

The world is now in great danger. A cataclysmic nuclear war might break out as the result of some terrible accident or of an explosive deterioration in international relations such that even the wisest national leaders would be unable to avert the catastrophe. Universal disarmament has now become the essential basis for life and liberty for all people.

The difficult problem of achieving universal disarmament would become far more difficult if more nations or groups of nations were to come into possession of nuclear weapons. We accordingly urge that the present nuclear powers not transfer nuclear weapons to other nations or groups of nations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or the Warsaw Pact group, that all nations not now possessing these weapons voluntarily refrain from obtaining or developing them, and that the United Nations and all nations increase their efforts to achieve total and universal disarmament with a system of international controls and inspection such as to insure to the greatest possible extent the safety of all nations and all people.

Signed

Street

City State

MOBILIZING A PARISH

(Continued from Page Twelve)

tant appears on this view to have a few generals, but no army. This is not to overlook the situation of a few concerned lay people who find no sympathetic leadership. The overall pictures obtains of a Church, the leaders of which know quite well its impotence while the average churchgoer remains unaware and unmoved. In fact people have been drawn to the Church because they like it as it is, not because they want to make it something else!

This is all preface to the practical question of how we go about preparing the Church to take "infinitely more honest, courageous and costly positions in the name of Jesus Christ and his Gospel about matters of life-and-death importance in our bleeding world" (Malcolm Boyd). For those who are really convinced that the Church is not doing its job, and are serious enough to want to move beyond verbalisms, then the discussion must be in terms of strategy and tactics as applied to a parish church — the only place where the majority of Christians are found. A genuine call for a revitalized Church means nothing unless it is spelled out in terms of what can or should be attempted by Christians in the local parish.

The call for a change may come from the top. Mobilization begins at the parish level. Here and abroad there are attempts being made to develop a creative minority of concerned Christians in a local parish. We ought to hear of their efforts and success.

The first obstacle to effective action in the average parish is structural; the fact that there is no regular weekly period when the parish meets as a whole to discuss its common life and work. The Church gathers on Sunday for worship. It rarely meets with the same regularity and sense of duty to implement that worship.

The first practical step, therefore, may be regarded as a recovery of the old fashioned mid-weekly Church "meetin". Such a meeting for all in the parish who are serious about their Church membership should be scheduled with the same priority and regularity as the Sunday worship. This is not to be understood as just another Church "program" to be developed in competition with existing parish organizations. This is to be the meeting of the Church cutting across all other activity of the parish, which will continue as is. It is obvious that the establish-

ment of such an evening will take time, thought and involve a minority of those people for whom "Church" means little more than Sunday morning activity and weekly guild, etc. The decisive fact to be established is a regular time and place where issues can be brought up, discussed, and acted upon. The present structure of the average parish does not provide the opportunity to communicate to the whole body the important issues being raised by the ecumenical, liturgical, missionary, and social movements.

This very minor example of operational thinking is offered with the conviction that those who seek to do something about the retreating Church have got to translate their concerns into practical suggestions.

Are there others?

POINTERS For PARSONS

By Robert Miller

WHEN Jesus asked, "Whom do ye say that I am?" Peter answered in a sentence, but if we were asked that question we might drag out volumes of theology. The Christian so readily stumbles between the glad cry of recognition and its evaluation in systems of theology.

Thinking of this, it was interesting to come across an old letter (1923) written from an English vicarage by one who was himself a theologian. It read:

You say your theological thought is unformed. It seems to me to be fresh and vigorous and sincere. I should beware of "forming" it too rigidly. It seems to me that we are over-weighted with theology, much of it the product of ages that have utterly passed away. More than that, it's all too logical: built upon premises that are assumed as true, and then reasoned out to the bitter end. The N.T. is full of romance, poetry, metaphor, life. Theology removes all this, or rather takes it all as literal, dry-as-dust fact, and then builds upon it its unshakeable system. By this means, e.g. out of the beautiful thought of ransom, theology can prove that God couldn't forgive anyone unless somebody gave him something for it!

Thank God, however, we have St. Luke's Gospel, with the Lost Sheep, the Lost Son and the Good Samaritan. And even the worst of us, in

our dealings with others, don't always insist on the whole moral law being fulfilled. We take no notice whatsoever of "justice" if we love people. So I suppose does God: and Christ, in life and death, is the supreme expression and proof of this.

I don't suppose this is the whole of the case, but it's what I feel most strongly.

That was written to me nearly forty years ago when theology was first casting its spell on me. Where do I stand now?

I stand where I can be fascinated by theology and yet remain sceptical and where I can be won by Christ and yet be suspicious of every attempt to explain him.

THE NEW BOOKS

The English Bible: a history of translations by F. F. Bruce. Oxford. \$3.75

Once more, a fascinating story of the translation of the Bible into English, from its very beginnings to the New English Bible of 1961. This time the book is by a thoroughly equipped scholar, and the publishers have added superb illustrations to accompany the text. For example there is the wonderful statue of Tyndale on the Victoria Embankment in London. (I spent an afternoon trying to find a picture of it, with no success). There is a photograph of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, at the moment when the Scots Moderator handed her a Bible and said: "Here is Wisdom; This is the royal Law; These are the lively Oracles of God." A great moment in modern history, in a period when the soft-pedaling or the outright denial of religious belief is universal in some parts of the world! There is also Sir George Harvey's "Reading from a Chained Bible in the Crypt of Old St. Paul's Cathedral in London, 1540."

Every reader of the Bible will find this book a treasure-trove. It is especially welcome to American readers to find a warm appraisal of the RSV, a firm statement that it supports the Christian faith, and that school children find it far more intelligible than the older versions. We ourselves know it, over here; but it is good to see it stated in a book from abroad!

— Frederick C. Grant

The Ultimate Weapon — Christianity by Paul Stevens. Thomas Nelson. \$3.95

The author of this book is a Baptist minister, at present the director of the Southern Baptist convention's radio and television commission in Fort Worth, Texas. He calls his book "The Case for a Foreign Policy of Militant Christianity" and the plan he describes at length has something in common with the Peace

Kenneth R. Forbes
Book Editor

Corps of President Kennedy, but is on the whole an amalgamation of the foreign missionary forces of all Protestant religious bodies operating under one command and containing clergy, and lay people of many descriptions — physicians, scientists, technicians, etc. — and working in the underprivileged nations everywhere.

The underlying purpose of all this is to "fight Communism", which is evidently the author's dominant passion. The demonic nature of Communism is his consuming belief. His analysis of Marxism is superficial and reveals a need for a stiff course in economics, to which might well be added a meditation on Archbishop Temple's considered statement that Communism is basically a "Christian heresy".

He is not lacking in a realization of America's moral delinquencies, which he describes eloquently and fairly in one of his longer chapters — the "obliteration" bombing of West Europe in world war two and the later outrages at Hiroshima and Nakasaki as the high spots. The Korean Affair is treated very inadequately, both in its origin and in its prosecution. Little is said about the "frightfulness" of which the UN forces were guilty nor of the original reason for the Chinese entering the fray. Not a particularly worth while book for today.

Mystery of the Haunted Pool by Phyllis A. Whitney. Westminster. \$2.95

The Who-dun-its and other sorts of mystery stories continue to have immense popularity. They are good, bad and indifferent in dramatic and literary quality and they must, all of them, have juvenile as well as grown-up readers. It would seem that good quality mystery tales written especially for young folks would meet a real need, since much of the adult yarns are trash and

much more has a vocabulary not readily understood by teen-agers.

The author of this book has proved that this is the case. She has been and is a first-class specialist with children's mystery novels and other juvenile stories and her popularity grows with each new book. This Haunted Pool tale is really good and adults as well as youngsters will find it fascinating and wholesome.

Liturgy and Doctrine by Charles Davis. Sheed & Ward. \$2.50

Here is a small book dealing with great — even supreme — concerns of the Christian religion. We are familiar in a general way with the liturgical movement today and what it stands for in the life and thought of the Christian communities whose type of worship has been liturgical. Reformation has been and is needed in them all — Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran — and some drastic overhauling has been had by them all.

This book is an analysis of what the Roman Catholic Church has been doing to reform its liturgical habits. The first and elementary step was to teach the lay people to take an active part in the Mass, to assist personally in the offering of the Holy Sacrifice. The publishing and circulating of prayer books in the vernacular for the people to follow as they prepare for Mass and Communion has been singularly successful.

Further steps forward have resulted — both in the Roman Catholic Church and in other liturgical communions — in more popular teaching of Christian doctrine and of systematic Bible study, which the author of this book discusses at some length under the headings of "The Risen Christ", "The History of Salvation" and "Sacrifice and Sacraments".

The book as a whole will repay careful, meditative reading by Roman Catholics, Anglicans and Lutherans alike.

Freedom in Anglican Tradition Commended by Bishop Hines

★ In a statement strongly defending Bishop James A. Pike against charges of "heresy," Bishop John E. Hines of Texas declared that those who have accused the California churchman "have done violence to the sense of Christian forbearance."

"To proclaim a fellow churchman a heretic is a charge of such horrendous dimensions as to cause men . . . long and prayerful pause before presuming to arrogate to themselves such qualifications as had better be — and are — reserved for the Church's duly appointed bodies and time-tested procedures," he said.

Bishop Hines, a member of the National Council, noting his "warm personal regard" for Bishop Pike said he had only "unqualified respect for his integrity as a bishop in the Church of God."

He said he was "grateful" for Bishop Pike's "vigorous mind which is enlisted on the side of the Christian faith, inasmuch as it elicits reappraisals among the faithful without insisting upon absolute agreement."

The California bishop actually represents the strength of the Church, he said, "the kind of Church in which there can be no emergency so dramatic that it can dam up the avenues of tolerance."

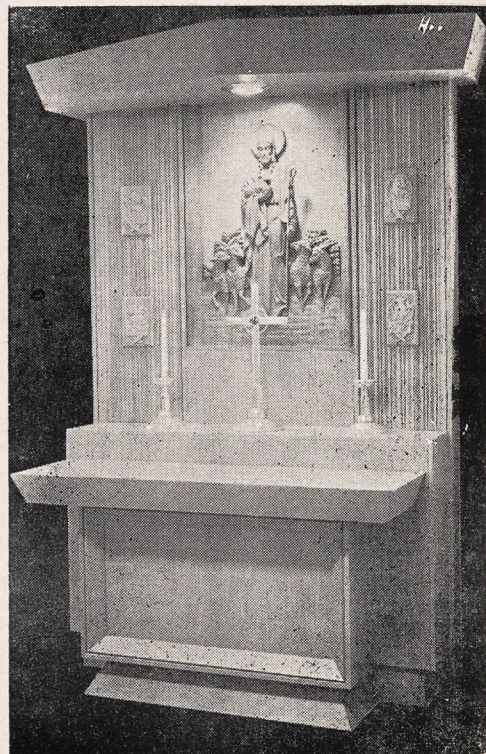
Bishop Hines said he issued

the statement because Bishop Pike "has been accused of holding heretical views in some quarters of this Church and because his presence in the diocese of Texas has made many of us reexamine our own Church tradition."

Bishop Pike was in Houston for five days during which he was a noon speaker at Christ Church Cathedral.

Bishop Pike has stated that he firmly believes in the doctrine of the Virgin Birth insofar as it related to the dual nature of Jesus, but was "agnostic" when it came to a literal belief in the historic details. The Virgin Birth, he said, "is a

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myth introduced to explain in picture language the dual nature of Christ" and churchmen should be free to accept or reject it.

Commenting on Bishop Pike's use of the term "myth," Bishop Hines explained in his statement that the California bishop did not use the word as a synonym for "untruth." He noted that in "contemporary theological circles 'myth' is a literary vehicle through which eternal truth can be conveyed (the better to be understood) even though the vehicle itself is non-factual."

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Announces a two-year residential program for men and women leading to the Master of Arts in Christian Education, beginning September 1961. For information, apply to the Director, the Rev. Kendig B. Cully, Ph.D., or the Dean.

To illustrate this Bishop Hines cited the fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden, where he said "the truth of man's condition (sin) is conveyed by a myth — the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

"Such use of the good myth has a significant place in the communication of the Gospel," the Texas bishop said. "To be able to steer one's way accurately through the confusion surrounding the word 'myth' is to be able more adequately to comprehend the profound reaches of God's truth and, incidentally, to appreciate the healthy freedom implicit in the Anglican tradition."

Bishop Hines said the Anglican tradition, in which the Episcopal Church stands, is a "roomy one, providing the framework for differences of viewpoints among the faithful while clearly holding the essential catholic faith."

"Ours is a credal Church," he said, "in which we are bound to — and by the essentials of the faith — belief in God's mighty works. We are not (and have never been) a confessional Church in that we are open on subsidiary questions which orbit around the essentials and have steadfastly refused to make an absolute, even of the Creed's phraseology.

"This 'roominess' sharply delineates this Church from some other Church traditions and affords a climate of thought and devotion compatible with an intelligent critical approach to, and appreciation for, the mighty revelation of God to man."

* ADDRESS CHANGE *

Please send your old as well as the new address

THE WITNESS

TUNKHANNOCK — PA.

What Does the Bible Really Say?

Announcement of the publication of *The New English Bible*, capping a long list of new translations issued in recent years, is a reminder of the vast importance of Christian scholarship in its continuing search for the truth of the **Bible**.

The seminaries of the Church are the centers where the interests and abilities of young men are nourished toward an even deeper understanding of Christian origins.

BERKELEY DIVINITY SCHOOL, New Haven, Connecticut; *BEXLEY HALL, THE DIVINITY SCHOOL OF KENYON COLLEGE*, Gambier, Ohio; *CHURCH DIVINITY SCHOOL OF THE PACIFIC*, Berkeley, California; *DIVINITY SCHOOL OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; *EPISCOPAL THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL*, Cambridge, Massachusetts; *EPISCOPAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF THE SOUTHWEST*, Austin, Texas; *THE GENERAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY*, New York City; *NASHOTAH HOUSE*, Nashotah, Wisconsin; *SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH*, Sewanee, Tennessee; *SEABURY-WESTERN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY*, Evanston, Illinois; *VIRGINIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY*, Alexandria, Virginia.

CONFERENCE ON WORSHIP AND MUSIC

★ The Rev. Massey H. Shepherd Jr., professor at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific, will be the leader of a conference on worship and music at Myrtle Beach, S. C., on the weekend of April 22-23, the Rev. O'Kelley Whitaker, chairman of the music commission of the diocese of North Carolina, has announced. Sponsored by the music commission of the diocese, the conference is open to all choristers, organists, and choir directors active in Episcopal churches in the two Carolinas.

Shepherd will present to conference members a guide to understanding the purpose of worship, especially in the Prayer Book services of Morning Prayer and Holy Communion, along with help in appropriately correlating the music to these services. This will be a conference with a strong practical slant.

UPPER ROOM CHAPEL WIDELY USED

★ During 1960, The Upper Room, interdenominational daily devotional guide published in Nashville, tabulated 43,106 guests who signed the register

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in its chapel. This is an increase of some 3,500 over last year. It is estimated that many other attended the chapel during that time without registering.

Persons came for 62 countries, and 50 States, including the District of Columbia.

There were 525 reservations for use of the chapel by groups. Fifty-two regular worship services and 79 communion services were held.

Among the denominational groups using the chapel were Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Nazarene, Episcopal, Christian Church, Cumberland Presbyterian, Free-will Baptist, Church of Christ, and a Catholic group from Brazil.

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ST. PAUL'S CHAPEL

Broadway & Fulton St.

Rev. Robert C. Hunsicker, Vicar

Sun HC 8:30, MP HC Ser. 10; Weekdays: HC 8 (Thurs. also at 7:30) 12:05 ex Sat.; Int & Bible Study 1:05 ex Sat.; EP 3; C Fri. 3:30-5:30 & by appt; Organ Recital Wednesday 12:30.

CHAPEL OF THE INTERCESSION

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Sun. 8, 9, 11; Weekdays HC Mon. 10, Tues. 8:15, Wed. 10, 6:15, Thurs. 7, Fri. 10, Sat. 8, MP 15 minutes before HC, Int. 12 noon, EP 8 ex Wed. 6:15, Sat. 5.

ST. LUKE'S CHAPEL

487 Hudson St.

Rev. Paul C. Weed, Jr., Vicar

Sun. HC 8, 9:15 & 11; Daily HC 7 & 8; C Sat. 5-6, 8-9, & by appt.

ST. AUGUSTINE'S CHAPEL

292 Henry Street

Rev. William W. Reed, Vicar

Sun. HC 8, 9, 10 (Spanish), 11:15 Sol & Ser.; Daily: HC 7:30 ex Thurs. 6:30, Sat. 9:30, EP 8; C Sat. 5:15 and by appt.

ST. CHRISTOPHER'S CHAPEL

48 Henry Street

Rev. William W. Reed, Vicar; Rev. W. D. Dwyer, p-in-c.

Sun. HC 8, 9:30, 11 (Spanish); Daily: HC 8 ex Fri. 9, Sat. 9:30, also Wed. 5:30, EP 5:15; C Sat. 3-5 & by appt.

- BACKFIRE -

Elizabeth G. Coates

Churchwoman of W. Whiteland, Pa.

J. Irwin Miller, president of the National Council of Churches, as quoted in The Witness of March 16, speaks of "the voice of the Church" as

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coming "from the pulpit or from denominations, or with the undeniable power of the National Council itself", and admits that, coming from "imperfect, fallible human mouths (it) can at times be wrong". He urges us to preserve that voice so that it will "speak up and point the way".

Isn't the National Council of Churches, speaking with that voice, doing more than pointing the way? In its recent pronouncements the Council's general board has also told us exactly how we must travel that way, in details which are matters of political choice among free Americans of various backgrounds and experiences, who just as sincerely believe that the means recommended for making the journey will carry us in the opposite direction.

In defending the instigators (whoever they may be) of the riot in San Francisco, the board seems to be trying to undermine the public's faith in its elected representatives in a matter of grave concern to all of us. I have reason to believe that the National Council has spoken out without thoroughly investigating both sides of the question.

In supporting medical care for the aged through the social security system, it assumes that needs can be met "only by united socially planned action" (meaning government action). United socially planned action, outside of government, assisted by the devotion and self-sacrifice of thousands of doctors, has been dealing with these needs increasingly successfully for many years in spite of the hampering competition for our resources by an increasingly meddlesome bureaucracy. If the Church would recommend Christian action instead of political action it would be more appropriate. A Christian approach would perceive that

many of those in the greatest need are not under social security, and many of those who are under social security have no need of this assistance.

Costs of medical care have risen so tremendously because of: 1) tremendous gains in the quality of medical care which is available to all, whether able to pay or not, and 2) pressures of greedy people for ever-increasing wages. It is within the province of the Church to urge people to restrain this greed for the sake of others as well as themselves.

Many more people could take care of their own personal needs if they didn't have to work so much to support the bureaucrats. A more equitable tax system would relieve them, whereas increased taxes will burden still more people and make them, too, dependent on government handouts.

There are always some who, even if they have the money, will not provide for their illness and old age. It is here that the Church itself can act as the father welcoming home the Prodigal Son, instead of shifting that responsibility to the enslaved taxpayer, who will soon have nothing left to give voluntarily.

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for whom the National Council presumes to speak, or over whom it assumes jurisdiction (I'm not sure which), can agree with some of its dicta and thoroughly disagree with others. It is to be hoped that not many will go along with it all the way. If it would concentrate on the Spirit, not the letter—the way, not the means—I feel sure that it would accomplish more towards its purported aims than by fanning the flames of controversy and conflict.

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