



**given for you**

**St. Nicholas News**

April 1979

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## THE RECTOR'S LETTER

Our dear Friends,

Firstly this month a word of apology. For months and months now we have been discussing, praying and planning the re-design of the Church. Plans and architect's impressions have been at the back of Church for us all to see at leisure. Even so, it was a shock to all of us that the work eventually began so quickly. Permission had been granted by the necessary bodies, but when we walked into Church one Tuesday morning to find that the work had already begun we were as surprised as anyone. We would have preferred to give at least a week's warning and so to those who came to Church and were distressed to find pews removed and other work begun without due warning we apologise for the hurt and distress which you felt. To see the Church in a mess is bound to be painful for all of us. May we ride the next few weeks with patience and pray that the vision which God has given to some for the changes in structure might bring glory to Him as it facilitates our worship together.

### International Year of the Child

1979 has been declared as U N. Year of the Child Wendy Sayers describes in the magazine a very practical way in which we can be involved

### Jessica Offord

When Malcolm and Irene brought little Jessica to the Healing Service, many of us were deeply moved to pray for her. How easy to pray while she is there for us to see ( and Hear!) May



we as a fellowship continue to soak her in prayer, asking God to heal her and give strength and sustenance to her parents.

### TOM ROBINSON

Before we moved to Nottingham needed to come to look for schools for the children and generally to get our bearings in a new city. We still remember with great joy the happy time we spent in the Robinson's delightful bungalow, the children loving "their" room in the loft overlooking the castle. It was a good introduction to Nottingham and that weekend we began to appreciate Tom's strengths. At the Annual General Meeting in March, Tom made it clear that he felt the time had come to lay aside his duties on the PCC. We know many who have worked with him over the past twenty four years on the PCC and many others who have benefited from his wisdom and understanding of affairs at St Nicholas' will regret this decision, but at the same time say thank you to him for those years of devoted service. We personally thank him for his ongoing friendship and loyalty even when we do things he clearly cannot go along with. He makes his feelings known and still offers the hand of fellowship and we are so grateful to him for all of that.

### WOMEN SIDESMEN

For two years now there has been dialogue about the rightness or otherwise of ladies greeting us at the door of the Church. The congregation is now so large that the wardens feel it would be good if four sidesmen are on duty each week, including a number of the fairer sex! It will be good to be welcomed by Gladys Cullen, Vi Redhead, Cathy Davies, Kathleen Robinson, Dorinda Bath and Penny Elliott - albeit not at the same time!



Finally, in this letter, we would like to share the substance of the Annual General meeting where we looked together at the joy and pain we have experienced over the past year. There has been so much cause for rejoicing in what the Lord continues to do among us. The year will be remembered by nearly thirty people as the time when they came into a personal relationship with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Others will remember the year as the time when Jesus the Healer met them in either physical or spiritual or emotional need and touched them with those hands which still have their ancient power to heal. Many of us will look back on the past months with thanks to God for answering our prayers concerning the Youth Work in the Church. It has been so good to have our cellar resounding with the praises of young people each Sunday evening. At the other end, the Baby Boom has continued to fill the Creche. The advent of Martin and Sue and the ease with which they have fitted into the fellowship has been a great blessing to many of us already(not least ourselves) and so we could go on .....blessing upon blessing.

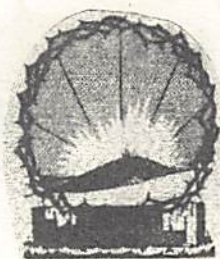
Where there is blessing and growth, there is inevitably pain also. Looking at the photograph of the first Willersley Castle Weekend revealed how many of our older people have died or moved. In one sense we have "lost" Fay Rumley and miss her unique contribution to the fellowship. Many still find the loss of the Choir painful. And so the joys and sorrows intertwine and hopefully we are being refined through them all. Practically, as was rightfully pointed out by various people, growth in numbers has made us untidy in Church and careless in our attitude to the halls. May we each consider it our duty to tidy up after ourselves and do more than our share in looking after the buildings we have been entrusted with?

Looking forward to sharing the joy of Easter with you all,

David Joyce

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## HOLY WEEK SERVICES

### THURSDAY.

*"The same night in which he was betrayed."*

7.45pm Holy Communion ( Said Series 111)

### GOOD FRIDAY.

11.0am Family Service  
(Children are invited to bring a small  
posy of flowers to decorate the pillars  
for Easter.)

2.0pm Meditation in the Lower Lounge

8.0pm Vigil in the Market Square

### SATURDAY

9.0am Decorate the Church for Easter



### EASTER DAY

8.0am Holy Communion (1662)

10.45am Morning Worship

11.45am Holy Communion (1662)

6.30pm Holy Communion (Series 111)

# Prayer Diary



## APRIL.....

Sunday 1st

Monday 2nd

That we may worship worthily today  
David speaking at Women's Fellowship

Tuesday 3rd

Wednesday 4th

Thursday 5th

Friday 6th

Saturday 7th

Sunday 8th

Monday 9th

Tuesday 10th

Wednesday 11th

Thursday 12th

Staff meeting today

Visit of Harry Sutton today

David and Irene Green in Nairobi

High School Houseparty today.

Quiet Day today for Prayer Group

David and Martin & their ministry

Counselling work in the Church

Tuesday Fellowship tonight

Preparation for the next magazine

That God will meet us in a special way at the Communion tonight.

Friday 13th

That we may remember His death with awe and wonder and love.

Saturday 14th

Mike and Fi's wedding today.

EASTER DAY

That the presence of the Risen Christ might be felt among us.

Monday 16th

Anne Kirwan on holiday

Tuesday 17th

Judith as she rests at home

Wednesday 18th

Fay Rumley in Uganda

Thursday 19th

The Disabled Christian Fellowship

Friday 20th

The re-design of our Church

Saturday 21st

The sick, the sad, the bereaved

Sunday 22nd

For the children of the Church

Monday 23rd

Women's Fellowship: Sue Knight

Tuesday 24th

Jessica Offord and the family

Wednesday 25th

Ongoing strength for Lizzie

Thursday 26th

Barry and Anthea in Peru

Friday 27th

Lyn and Elaine in Nigeria

Saturday 28th

Ruth and Nigel's wedding today.

Sunday 29th

Students returning.



# family



# news

## Congratulations

to John Tompkins and Mary Crisp who recently announced their engagement. They hope to be married in July.

We are delighted to hear too that Barbara Lord who used to worship with us when she was a student at Clifton has recently got engaged.

This month Frank and Peggy Wright are in Canada on a business trip.

Meanwhile John Holden has flown for the States where he will be working for the next five months. Hilary and the children will be joining him, so we shall miss the whole family until the autumn.



George Ingram has just retired after working with the Health Service for over thirty years. We pray God will bless his retirement and begin to use him in new and as yet, undiscovered ways. How many of us have cause to give thanks to God for his faithful ministry at St Nicholas'.

Judith Widdowson from Australia, the daughter of Charles, has recently been staying with Eric and Eileen Turner and it was very good to welcome her to St Nicholas' recently.

We have enjoyed catching a glimpse of each of our "home" students recently: Helen Wright, Claire Evans and Jane Lewis as well as Theo Weston.

## TUBINGEN



Our link with Tubingen began some years ago with the arrival of Anne Rose Grusse. Those links have been strengthened since last October when Doris Eisenhardt joined our fellowship. It has been such

a joy to have her as part of us for those months and to watch her grow up into Christ. More recently, Rolf joined us briefly and it has been so good to get to know him too. Now they have returned to Germany, may we remember their witness in that University of Tubingen.

David and Chris Tully worshipped with us again recently and it was so good to resume fellowship with them and to hear how God is blessing them in their teaching and giving them many opportunities for service, in Christian Unions in school and in various aspects of youth work. They seem to be thriving on the pressure!

Congratulations to Jane Bott on excellent results in her recent examinations in typing.

As changes take place to the Church structurally, the older members of the Church inevitably look back to years gone by. Dorothy Freestone has written to me, speaking of the forty-two years she has been a member of the Church, but pointing out that there is someone who has been here even longer -----



Gladys.

GLADYS CULLEN. Dorothy reminisces: "Gladys was a valued member of the Choir making it Number One priority in every respect. She could not be

inveigled to go to anything on a Friday night which interfered with Choir practice - and Sunday morning saw her just after ten o' clock ready to go into Church, rain, shine snow or any other daunting elements." Let's remember and express the thanks that we feel to Gladys.





Although the work on the re-design of the Church will not be complete by then, we would like the Church to look as beautiful as ever for Easter, symbolising the new life promised through the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. This

year we shall be short of helpers, so if you can possibly come to the Church at 9.0am on April 14th your help would be most welcome.

## **Night Shelter**

Every night men sleep rough in derelict houses or bus shelters. The Nottingham Help the Homeless Association provides beds and food for men in real need. Surplus men's clothing and underwear is urgently needed. Also garden tools: spade, fork and rake are needed. Please contact Tom Hawthorne (Tel: 625335) if you can help in any way. Clothing can either be collected or left at Tom's home.

## **world in a wheelchair**



Alyn Haskey tells us that the DISABLED CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP meets every Wednesday from 2.0pm- 3.15pm(approx) at the West Bridgford Day Centre on Loughborough Road (behind the Fire Station)

"Although the fellowship is for the disabled, we welcome able bodied people as well. We would appreciate your prayer support and your presence if you have the time.

If you know of any disabled people who would benefit from sharing with others their joys and sorrows we ask that you would tell them about this. We would appreciate any help that you can give us and send our greetings in the Name of Jesus.

# *In the Post*



Chester College.

Dear Joyce,

I am writing to ask whether you can possibly put this in the next parish magazine. I have been accepted to go on the Campus Crusade For Christ Summer Project from 7th July to Sept. 9th in Brighton. I would value people's prayers that the Lord will provide me with the right job, for, in order to support ourselves between those dates we need to have a Monday- Friday job finishing at 5.0pm in order to leave the evenings and weekends free for the mission. I will in April be writing to the Job Centre asking for a job between those dates. I am really looking forward to this Summer Project as I know that the Lord will teach me a lot over that period. However, in order to support myself over this period I need to obtain a job and I pray the Lord will give me the right job at the right time.

It was good to be back at St Nicholas' last weekend and to join in the fellowship of both the Communion and the Prayer/Healing Service. I miss the fellowship of St Nicholas' while at College and miss the general news of St Nick's folk so it is good to be back with them to catch up on everybody's news and especially to see those closest to me.

I will be returning from College for the Easter break on Friday 6th April and look forward to joining in again with the fellowship.

With love in Christ,

*Jane Lewis.*



**THE MESSAGE OF THE  
CROSS**



**A**

**meditation**

O teach me what it meaneth -  
That cross uplifted high,  
With One, - the Man of Sorrows -  
Condemned to bleed and die!  
O teach me what it cost Thee  
To make a sinner whole;  
And teach me, Saviour, teach me  
The value of my soul!

**on the  
death of Jesus**



Darkness! Deep, thick, penetrating darkness!  
The darkness of despair

the darkness of separation, total abandonment.

My God, do not leave me in this hole alone.

The darkness overwhelms me.

The aloneness crushes my very being.

I am numb..... afraid.....alone.....

forgotten..... nothing.....

That's what sin has done for me, Lord.

Yesterday I was so happy in You. To You I had  
confessed all my sin and You came and washed me  
so that I knew that I was clean - washed right  
through to every particle of my being. And now...  
that beach of my soul which You had so gently  
washed with the lapping waves of Your Spirit,  
is defiled once more. That beautiful clean beach  
Lord, where each particle of sand had been  
saturated by Your renewing waters, is defiled so  
soon as with the thick miry juice of an oil slick.  
My Lord: Who can deliver me from this darkness  
of separation from You which my own willfulness  
has wrought?

Child! Look at the darkness surrounding My Cross.  
I too have known the abandonment, the separation,  
the fear, the aloneness. But see, in the middle of  
that dark picture is My Cross. Receive once more  
the graces of My death into the centre of Your  
darkness. It was for this I died.





JESUS! LAMB OF GOD HAVE MERCY ON US!  
JESUS! BEARER OF OUR SINS HAVE MERCY  
ON US!  
JESUS! REDEEMER OF THE WORLD, GIVE US  
YOUR PEACE.

What happens child, when you allow Me in the place  
of fear and darkness?

Lord! I see You there, in the centre of the  
darkness of despair and failure. I see You as the  
Lamb waiting to take these fresh sins upon Your  
patient back. My head tells me it was for this You  
died. "Surely, He has borne our griefs and carried  
our sorrows" it reminds me. Hesitantly, reluctantly  
I place on Your Sacred back, the sin which weighs  
me down. The wilfulness, the negligence, the  
self-centredness. You shall bear it away to  
Calvary.

"Oh teach me what it meaneth -  
That sacred crimson tide -  
The blood and water flowing  
From Thine own wounded side.  
Teach me that if none other  
Had sinned, but I alone,  
Yet still Thy blood, Lord Jesus,  
Thine only, must atone."

Child! Where is your sin now? Where is the  
black, thick, penetrating oil slick?

It has gone! It has gone! Once more I have been  
washed clean by Your death and that precious shed  
blood and .....

I AM FREE! .....

from guilt

from condemnation.....

FREE.....!



Your death, Lord Jesus has set me free. Thank You Jesus, for Your love for me; Thank You Jesus for Your grace so free..... Will You teach me what it cost You, Lord Jesus, to obtain my freedom?

### Jesus Mocked and Beaten



He was despised  
rejected  
a Man of Sorrows  
grief-stricken

He was flogged  
dragged  
thorn-crowned  
bedraggled

AND THIS SCAPEGOAT FIGURE

BLOODSOAKED  
RAGGED  
HUMILIATED.....

IS THE SON OF GOD!

You, Who created the world!

You, Who only poured out LOVE.....

stand there receiving silently, patiently, blow upon blow the anger, the hatred, the loathsomeness of the sin of the world - yes, and my sin.  
SEE IF THERE BE ANY SORROW LIKE HIS SORROW.





Peter Denies Jesus . . . . . Peter Denies Jesus again . . . .

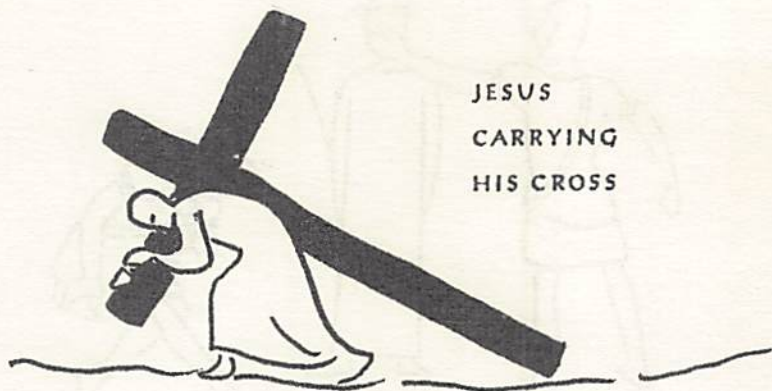
Jesus Sentenced to Death . . . . . Jesus Nailed to the Cross . . . .

The Death of Jesus . . . . . Jesus' Side Pierced



Master! I look at that picture and hastily turn my face away! It's as if I can feel that cruel, mocking slap on Your naked flesh. It hurts, Lord, to see You standing there and bearing that pain so patiently because I know that it is I who have placed You there. I sense, too, that the stinging slice to Your face penetrated deeply into Your loving, sensitive spirit. I look at that picture and weep and sorrowfully sing: "Jesus, how lovely You are.....I begin to feel how much it cost You to set me free. Thank You....."





JESUS  
CARRYING  
HIS CROSS

Lord! I look up at the heavens which You have made and I marvel. I rejoice to be part of the world which You alone have made. But here I see You, great Creator, bowed down by the weight of a crude man-made cross. What does it mean? Will You unfold the mystery? What is the weight under which You stagger?

Child! Hear My words:

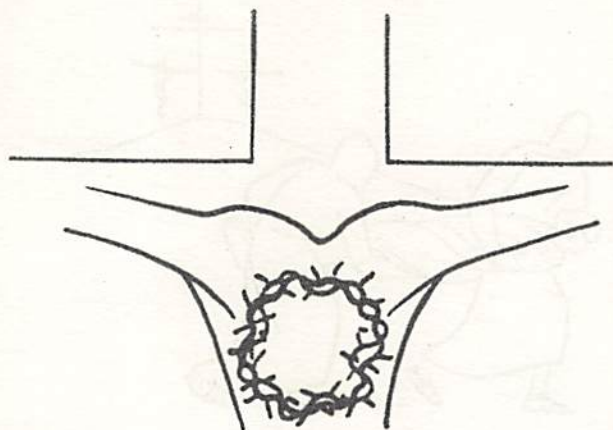
"All my frame burns with fever; all My Body is sick. Spent and utterly crushed, I cry aloud in anguish of heart. O Lord, You know all My longing; My groans are not hidden from You. My heart throbs, My strength is spent; the very light has gone from my eyes". (Psalm 38)

Yes, Lord! I begin to hear the grief, the fear, the pain and shock of the stripping of Your body and Your spirit, the very vulnerability of Your exposure and nakedness, Your humiliation. Yes, I hear Your cry, that deep cry from Your crushed and broken spirit:

"I am a worm and no man, the butt of men, laughing stock of the people. All who see Me deride Me. They curl up their lips, they toss their heads. Do not leave me alone in My distress; come close, there is none else to help." (Psalm 22)

You were feeling the darkness I feel when I am bowed down with sin. You Who were sinless,..... that agony of Spirit, the darkness, the abandonment, You are bearing IN MY PLACE.....





O teach me what it meaneth-  
Thy love beyond compare  
The love that reacheth deeper  
Than depths of self despair!

How did it feel, my Lord and my God, to be hanging there exposed on the criminal's cross? How did it feel as You heard men hammering nails into Your hands and feet? Can that piercing pain fixing You to that cruel Cross be described for such as I to understand? Yes, You have allowed me a glimpse of Your agony as those flesh and bone crushing nails were driven through Your body:

"Like water I am poured out, disjointed are all my bones. My heart has become like wax, it is melted within my breast. Parched as burnt clay is My throat, My tongue cleaves to My jaws .....they tear holes in My hands and My feet; You have laid Me in the dust of death. Lord, do not leave me alone, My strength make haste to help Me. Rescue My soul from the sword; My life from the power of these dogs."

And so I stand and watch You die. I watch Your vitality and very life-blood drain away. I hear You cry:

IT IS FINISHED!

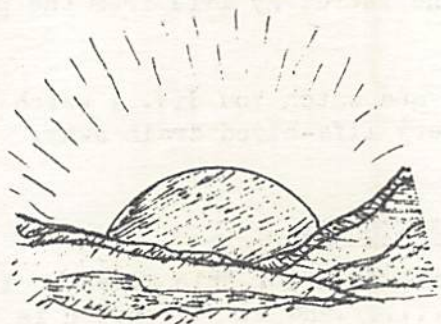
You came to this world for this moment. Your work is finished .....and my redemption is begun.



And so, sorrowfully, they carried away Your broken Body to entrust it to that deep, dark, cave. But now I see what Your death has given me..... The darkness has gone and as I see You enshrouded in that tomb, my heart rejoices for I know that death could not hold You. You are the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Conqueror, the Victor. You will break through the confines of death and so I know that no dark place - of sin, of despair can hold me for You are with me and You have given me forgiveness, release, hope and the promise of Your eternal Presence. And so You have turned my mourning into joy, my heaviness into praise, and my darkness into light, the light of the

#### RESURRECTION!

You Who trod the path of pain to receive the acclamation and praise of Your Father, strengthen me in my resolve to share in Your sufferings as well as the power of your resurrection!





# praise

## A LETTER FROM LIZZIE

My dear Joyce,

It was lovely to be in Church on Sunday - we thoroughly enjoyed the service and were sorry that we could not stay longer.

I still have my ups and downs and found the February letter in the Church magazine very helpful because it said a lot about struggle.

It occurred to James and myself that we would like to say thank you to the "church" for the help we have received over the last two years. The following poem was written a few months ago and the words in it extend to our parents and our brothers and sisters in Christ and to those who helped us who do not know Him, our thanks.

## Your caring

"I want to say thank you for coming  
When I needed you  
And had no strength to call.....  
Our Lord told you  
Did He not?  
I want to say thank you for washing  
My clothes  
Ironing them so neatly and lovingly.....  
Our Lord asked you  
Did He not?  
I want to say thank you for sweeping  
Clean my house  
When I was low,  
Our Lord sent you  
Did He not?"

And most of all my lovely friends  
I want to say thank you for washing  
My feet when  
No longer could I stoop.  
Our Lord did so  
Did He not? "

With very much love,

Lizzie  
-----  
X X X X



LATEST NEWS.....

Since receiving that letter from Lizzie, just too late to go into last month's magazine, there have been encouraging signs of the restoration of health and vitality to Lizzie. She has just started nursing again, she and James have both been able to come to Church and plan to come to the Tuesday Fellowship, they have been able to go out for a meal together and the results of recent tests from the hospital are encouraging. Praise God for all these signs of His love and answer to prayer. May we continue to pray for James and Lizzie and little Claire. Pray for real rest and refreshment as they go on holiday together in Kent. Pray too for continuing return of physical strength and also that as Lizzie begins to adapt to the old routine, self confidence will return for all the tasks which have to be done.





# David Green

Last year, St Nicholas' sent a cheque to David and Irene Green in Nairobi to go towards the expense of enlarging their kitchen. They had written to explain that with all the hospitality involved in living in a city "vicarage", an extension of their tiny kitchen would be a great blessing. Unfortunately, this coincided with a need for repairs to their Church - St Mark's , Nairobi, and their PCC felt that this was more urgent than the Green's kitchen. In a recent letter, David wrote:

"new and considerably modified plans are being prepared for the extending of our kitchen, which are more modest than the first ones. They will be a great help to us and we hope and pray that the new PCC(elections in March) will prove to consist of godly humble and wise men with true spiritual vision."



## HELPING BY PRAYER

David wrote of other topics for praise and prayer: "Life continues quite an uphill struggle but there are some encouragements, especially among the young people. A group of them went off to Kajiado last weekend, quite on their own initiative, to see how things were going on there following their visit during the Maasailand Mission in December and the Lord encouraged their efforts with four or five students in Kajaido Secondary School coming to Christ. Otherwise many of our most loyal members, black and white seem to be caught by the sheer pressure of life; and numbers at our new Evening Praise Service and at our Wednesday Evening Fellowship have been

disappointingly low, not because these fail to meet their needs, but because they have such full and busy lives that they cannot give the time they would like to meeting together as a Church.

That article by Di McClintock reminds us to continue to pray regularly for the Greens in the uphill task which they face.

#### A PRAYER FOR THE GREENS

Lord Jesus, You Who knew how it felt to be weary, discouraged, troubled in spirit, have mercy on David and Irene and their children. In times of perplexity, will you guide them, in times of weariness refresh them anew with the dew of Your Holy Spirit, continually empower them for the task to which You have called them. When their task is to go forth sowing in tears, will You give them the joy of reaping a rich harvest with laughter. For the glory of Your Name. Amen





## INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD



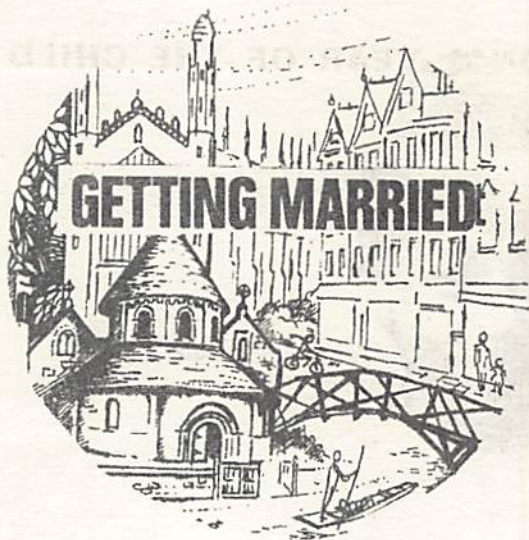
Luiz

Luiz is an orphan. He is one of 65 boys living in "Boy's Town", a Christian home for orphaned or abandoned boys in a village called Araras, 45 miles from Rio de Janeiro, capital city of Brazil.

Without the care he receives at this home, Luiz would be destined to a life of crime, living rough and sleeping out on the streets of Rio or the nearby town of Petropolis. Poverty forces many parents to abandon their children to such a life. Luiz is glad to be able to attend the local school at Araras and to receive Christian teaching at Boy's Town, which also teaches practical skills like carpentry to older boys. He also helps look after chickens and rabbits kept by the boys, fetches water and firewood and likes playing football.

Luiz is one of 4,000 children being sponsored by Christians in Britain through Tear Fund's Childcare Scheme. Sponsors pay £8 per month to help provide food, clothing, medical care, Christian training and a basic elementary education for a needy child.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE INVOLVED SEE DETAILS IN  
CHURCH.



### SUBMISSION

Spring! It is at this time of year that I become most homesick for Cambridge. The aconites and snowdrops which carpet the Backs of the Colleges even before the daffodils arrive to dance their welcome to Spring. It is at this time too that the River Cam becomes alive again with eager punters and those who adventure upstream in canoes. Walking our two children to school each day along these river banks provided plenty of time for reflecting that the marriage partnership as described in Scripture is rather like two people adventuring in a canoe. Last time we saw that the husband's paddle is love; sacrificial, caring, forgiving, unbreakable love; the quality of love with which Christ loves His Bride, the Church. Walter Trobisch has described it this way:

Because He loves us, He becomes one with us. He shares everything with us. Whatever is ours becomes His. Our poverty becomes His poverty, our fear becomes His fear. Our suffering becomes His suffering. Our guilt becomes His guilt. Our punishment becomes His punishment. Our death becomes His death.



# LOVE...

His riches became our riches. His peace became our peace. His joy became our joy. His forgiveness became our forgiveness. His innocence became our innocence."

No wonder Paul exclaimed with awe: See what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us ."

This is true love.....it is also true  
SUBMISSION

## WHAT IS SUBMISSION?

Submission , as I see it, is not a weak quality. In no way is it the unquestioning obedience, cringing, spineless submission from fear which was often the case in Jewish marriages where divorce was all too easy for the man to effect. If the Jewish wife spoiled her husband's dinner; walked in public with her head uncovered, talked with men in the street, spoke disrespectfully to her husband's parents, was troublesome or quarrelsome, or if he happened to find a woman he considered more attractive than his wife, he could divorce her, simply by handing to her a Bill of Divorcement making her homeless. Such a precarious marriage led inevitably to submission from fear.

It seems to me that our Lord came to deliver women from this servile role and to bring them into the glorious freedom which true womanhood can be when He sets a woman free to be the person He made her to be.

When, therefore, Paul writes to the Ephesians about submitting to one another, admonishing the wives to submit to their husbands as they would to their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, he is bringing them into the realm of the positive from the prison of so called love in which they had been trapped for so long.

## TRUE SUBMISSION

True submission is voluntary selflessness in response to love. It is a positive yielding of ourselves to the other person, placing everything at his disposal.

### VOLUNTARY SELFLESSNESS

Our Lord Himself is the perfect example of this. Walter Trobisch again points out that :

"Jesus left His mother for you, because He loves you. every one of you.

Jesus left His Father for you, because He loves you, loves you personally.

Jesus left all the glory and splendour of heaven for you, emptying Himself, humbling Himself for you, because He loves you so much."

That is submission: voluntarily laying aside, when necessity demands, all that we hold dear in response to love. ( I pause to reflect that our Lord loves me like that and yet I find it difficult to submit to His loving. How much harder it will be, inevitably, to submit to one whose patterns of loving, at best, are less gentle, less satisfying than His. That encourages me to feel that this is a life-time's work, not something we shall attain easily!)

## SEEKS NOT HER OWN

### A POSITIVE YIELDING OF OURSELVES.

Paul exhorts us to yield every part of ourselves to the Lordship of Christ. What does this mean? Surely it involves handing over our thought patterns, our powers of creativity, our feelings, our bodies that they might be used by Him.



Similarly, then, we as wives are asked to yield ourselves to our husbands, with a positive desire to co-operate with him.

I see this working out effectively as I study Proverbs 31. The wife in this chapter has tremendous gifts as an administrator, a trader, a needlewoman, a counsellor. She is deeply involved in the caring ministry. All of these gifts, it would appear, are submitted to her husband and centered in the home and the result was a fulfilling partnership which facilitated the husband's own work, brought him wide acclaim and at the same time gave her a varied, busy, fulfilled life plus the sense of wellbeing that her husband's expressed approval must have brought her. There is no sign of servility here - rather a partnership of love as they encouraged one another. That, it seems to me, is what submission is all about.

But let's look together at what this might mean in practical terms for a twentieth century couple. e

#### DECISION MAKING .....

In these days when most wives will have had some form of training before marriage, she will bring to the marriage a mind of her own about all sorts of things. And rightly so! So often, she will look at the same set of circumstances as her husband with completely different insights. Submission, or yielding, therefore will simply be a sharing of those insights and female sensitivities with him, then leaving him to make the ultimate decision in the few occasions where unilateral decision making is necessary! That could sound stifling and threatening if a wife feels she is not being listened to. But where the husband is loving her with gentleness and understanding he will both hear what she has to contribute and act accordingly.

Submission is not sighing: "You do what you think best dear" and criticising for months on end because a wrong decision has been made!

## MAKING LOVE

Someone had written this moving paragraph about sexuality within marriage:

"When I look tenderly on the body of another, as I experience what it is to feel the tenderness of another's caresses and the delight of knowing I am loved as well as loving, it seems momentarily impossible to separate myself from my body. So much am I a bodily creature that the one who accepts my body, caresses also with tenderness my inmost being. Or so at times it seems."

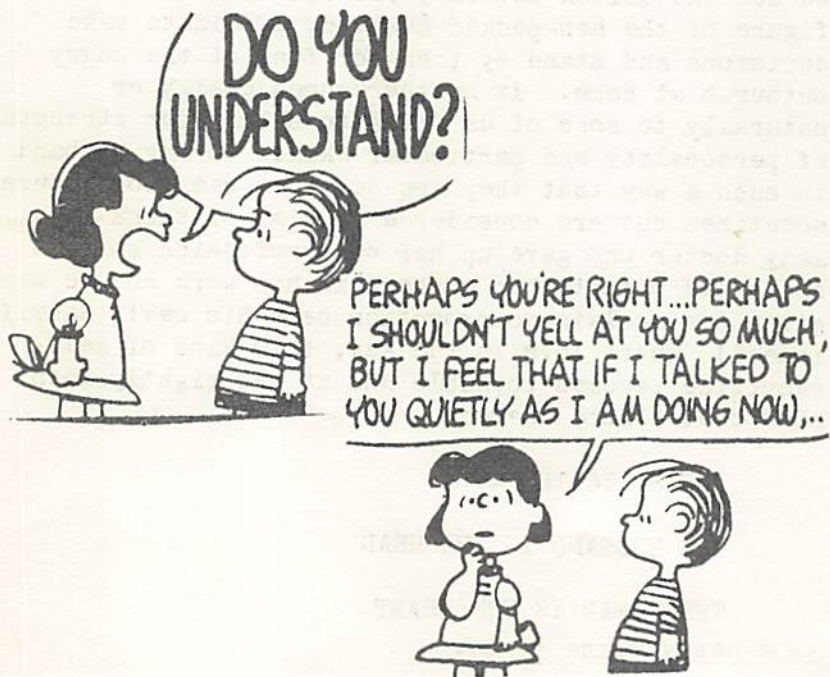
Intercourse between husband and wife: the joining of two bodies of those who love one another to form one flesh can be one of the most soothing and healing parts of marriage. What a tragedy, therefore that so many couples today are not allowing the Holy Spirit to touch this vital part of their marriage, causing their partners untold harm and distress. I think of both men and women over the years who have shared the deep yearning they have that this part of their marriage should be put right; many sharing they would be willing to make immense sacrifices if only sexual fulfillment could be achieved.

It is well known, and widely discussed that men have greater needs in this area than women. I would want to argue that we cannot generalise in this area and some men in fact are guilty of depriving their wives and not vice versa! But, where does submission lead us if our husband is the one with more needs in this area than the wife? In an amusing, but sad, chapter on sexuality in his book: "Marital Breakdown" Jack Dominionian quotes from a letter written by a man to his wife, in which he points out that he has tried to make love to her on many occasions during the past year and he quotes some of the reasons given for her lack of response: too tired; mother in law sleeping in the next bedroom; headache; backache... etc etc..... Result? A disappointed and



disillusioned husband. Do we as wives need to learn to yield our bodies to our husbands even during those times when we ourselves are not being fulfilled sexually.....? Both Paul and Peter lead me to believe that sexual oneness needs to be worked at for the sake of spiritual growth and maturity! Genesis 2 leads me to recognise that God gave first woman to first man because He saw that "it was not good for man to be alone". How many lonely married people there are who fail for various reasons to enter into one of the most fulfilling relationships of all; the complete at-oneness of two lives intertwined.

This is a vast subject and, unsatisfactorily, we must leave it there.....to be continued in one form or another ..... Let it just be said that if it is true that when you, my partner, caress my body in a meaningful way, you caress my inner being, filling me with a sense of well being, the reverse may also be true. When you fail to caress me in a way which I find beautiful and fulfilling, you leave my inner being feeling forlorn and neglected and I feel desperately alone. Husbands! Love your wives with sexual sensitivity! Wives! Give your bodies to your husbands! For it is not good for any of us to be alone!.....



# YOU'D NEVER LISTEN!



May we hear the heartfelt cry of our partner in the sexual area and learn to cooperate with one another again, for if that area fails, we may well find other aspects of marriage disintegrating also.

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## INTELLECT AND SKILLS.....

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Most men still need to be seen as the head of the home and the tragedy is that where this is not so, we see the (often lovable) but rather pathetic figure of the hen-pecked husband, afraid to make decisions and stand by them for fear of the angry outburst at home. It neither comes easily or naturally to some of us wives to submit our strengths of personality and particular skills to our husband in such a way that they are not even seen to be ours sometimes but are considered as his! I think of a lady doctor who gave up her own profession so that she could promote her husband in his work and he was given the acclaim as promotion came his way! Sacrifice indeed! Where love is the key, this kind of self-sacrifice becomes possible and it has rightly been said that a home where:

CHRIST IS THE LORD

THE HUSBAND IS THE HEAD

THE WOMAN IS THE HEART

is a happy place to be.



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## SPIRITUALLY.....

Undoubtedly the times when we have been closes to one another in our marriage have been those times when we have been deeply united in Christ. Then the companionship angle seems to right itself, the sexual relationship seems to fall into place and the loneliness which sometimes creeps into the happiest of marriages, disappears. And yet, how easy it is for various reasons (children, babies, business, the problems of others) to allow this side of our relationship to slip. Sometimes this disintegration occurs because we fail to yield our very different insights to one another in the spiritual realm. Here again, so often the wife has different insights to bring to a passage of Scripture, or indeed to the whole area of prayer. Are we willing to share these with our husband for the enrichment of us both and the partnership or are we withholding what God is teaching us because we are afraid of not being accepted or understood?

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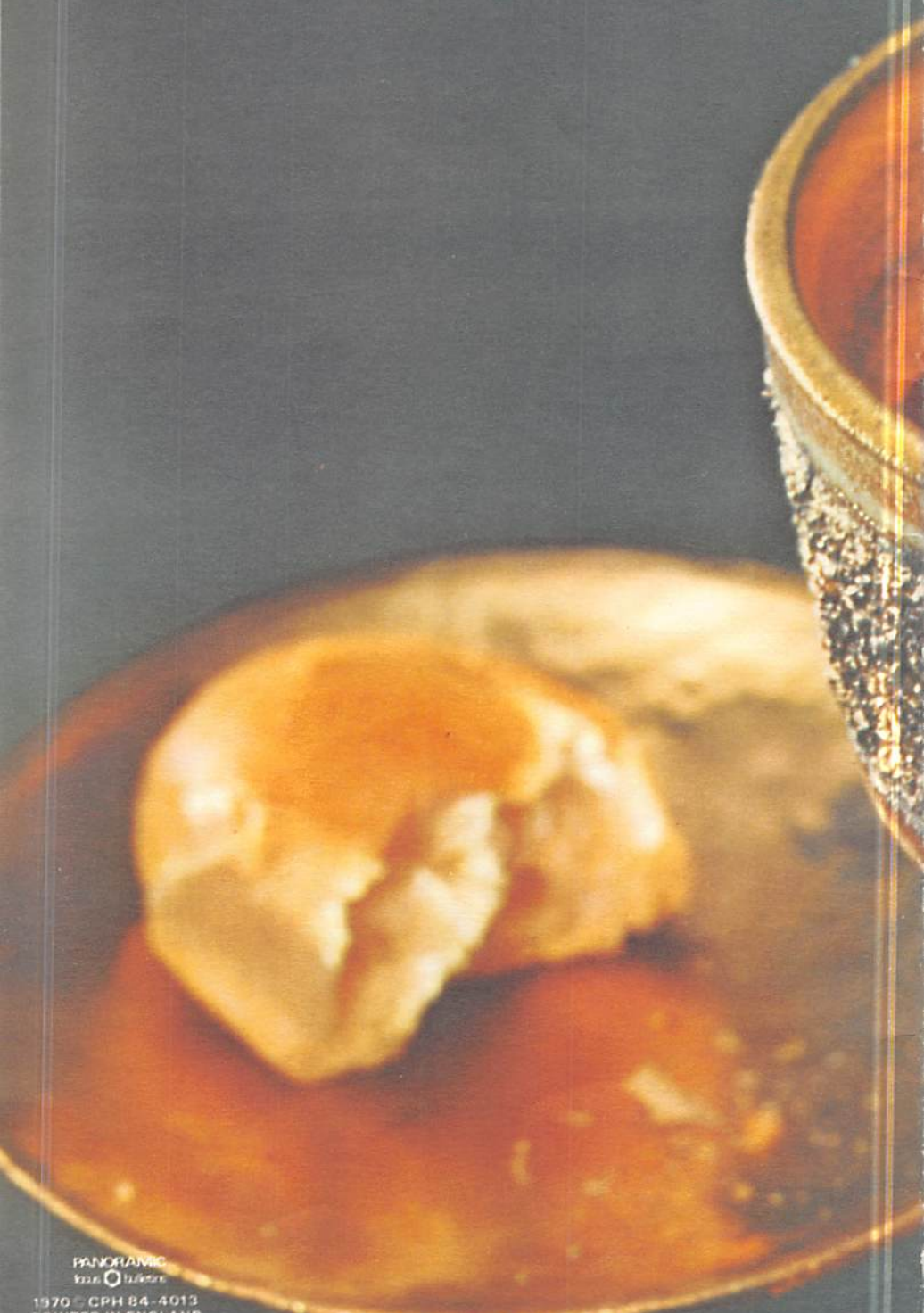
## PADDLE YOUR OWN CANOE.....


There we must leave it. To try to sum up from Ephesians 5. It seems to me that Paul is saying, in effect: LOVE (the love with which Christ loved the Church) is the call: the husbands paddle if you like. Yielding, submitting, is the free, ready response to that love and is the wife's paddle. As I recall Cambridge days, when the canoeists were both working in energetic partnership they were well able to negotiate even choppy waters.



*submitting....*

# this is my body +



PANORAMIC  
by  Tullerine

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