

CHURCH AND KING

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'Remember'

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1995

The Annual General Meeting will take place on Saturday 27 May at the Church of St. Mary-le-Strand, by kind permission of the Priest-in-charge and Churchwardens. Proceedings will follow a similar pattern to last year. We shall begin with a Solemn Eucharist at 12 Noon. The preacher has yet to be announced. The Meeting will follow the service in church. Afterwards, it is hoped that as many as are able will share fellowship over a meal.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence;
2. Minutes of the A.G.M. for 1994;
3. Matters arising;
4. Treasurer's Report;
5. Future Arrangements;
London Secretary's Report;
6. Chairman's Comments;
7. Election of Officers & Committee;
8. Any other business:

Please inform the Chairman of any items to be raised under Any Other Business, if possible by Saturday 20 May.

COMMEMORATION OF KING CHARLES 1995.

The commemoration of the Royal Martyr took place at the Banqueting House, Whitehall. on Monday 30 January. Prayers were offered and

the wreath laid at the bust of the King, followed by a Solemn Celebration of the Eucharist in the Banqueting House. The celebrant was the Chairman, Fr. Barrie Williams; Fr. Royston Beale acted as deacon and preached the Royal Martyr sermon (which is printed below); Mr John Wittich acted as sub-deacon. The choir of St. Mary-le-Strand provided a particularly beautiful rendering of Palestrina's Mass **Aeterna Munera Christi**. We should like to express our thanks to them, also to Peter Maplestone and his assistants, and especially to the Royal Palaces Department for the privilege of using the Banqueting House.

In the United States, the commemoration was held on Saturday 28 January with a Solemn Votive Mass at St. Paul's, Washington, D.C., in the presence of the Rt. Rev. James Montgomery, formerly Bishop of Chigago, who also preached. On Sunday 29 January, a Solemn Mass took place at Holy Innocents' Episcopal Church, San Francisco - the oldest Anglican church in that city.

CELEBRATING THE FESTIVAL IN AUSTRALIA

A new venue was chosen for the Brisbane region's Mass on 30th January. It was held in the Church of the Good Shepherd at Mudgeeraba on Queensland's Gold Coast.

Celebrant was the Reverend Dr. Richard Martin, a member of our Society who is attached to St. Peter's Church, Southport. Preacher was Fr. Reg Mills, Australian Secretary. After the Mass, the congregation continued the celebration of the occasion with dinner at a nearby Club. There was a certain ecumenical touch as the lessons were read by the members of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox parts of the Church.

In the Melbourne region, there was a Solemn Evensong at Christ Church, Brunswick at which the annual Charles Harris Memorial Sermon (about King Charles) was preached by the Principal of Melbourne's Baptist Theological College. The Vicar of Christ Church, Father David Robarts, was celebrant and preacher at the Eucharist to commemorate the Festival at St. Mark's Sunshine, another Melbourne suburb.

Celebrations in Sydney centred on a special Eucharist at St. John's church, in suburban Gordon, on Saturday 28th January and this Service was followed by a celebration lunch. On Sunday evening, 29th January, there was a Solemn Evensong and Benediction in the Church of King Charles the Martyr in suburban Padstow, at which the preacher was Society member Dr. Barry Spurr. Mass the following day, the Patronal Festival of that Church, was celebrated by Bishop Dennis Hodge.

GETTING THE MESSAGE ACROSS

I personally felt very encouraged by two items in the press about the time of the January commemorations. One was the article by Edward Fox (not the actor!) in the **Independent** newspaper on 31 January '*Head of a divine cult - Followers keep faith with the spirit of Charles I*'. The other was the article '*Commemorating Charles I*' by Howard Tomlinson in the February number of **History Today** (but out in time for 30 January). This was a scholarly article which places the cult of the Royal Martyr in its proper context. I note that other commemorations which began in the same way had a short-lived appeal. That of our own Saint is as much alive in 1995 as in 1695. As a Society, we need to get across the message of the abiding importance of this commemoration. Praise be, we seem to be making some headway.

Barrie Williams.

REMINDER particularly to our British members - details of forthcoming commemorations of King Charles in 1996 should be sent to the Editor by 1 November. Reports, even if very summary, are welcome, and should be sent as soon as possible

after 30 January for inclusion in the Spring **Church and King**. It is important for members outside London to know where commemorations are held.

ALL THE KINGS' MEN

On 25 March, Carr Hall, the junior department of St. Hilda's School, Whitby, with some adult assistance, put on afternoon and evening performances of Richard Rodney Bennett's light opera. *All the King's Men*. This little-known work is ideal for performance by school children, and although (regrettably) moderately Roundhead in sentiment gives participants a chance to take part in a fanciful re-enactment of the siege of Gloucester in 1643. The production was directed by one of the music staff, Mrs Allison Walker-Moorcroft. Readers may be amused to learn that the part of the King was taken by your Chairman.

ST. MARY'S, HEADINGTON

We were pleased to learn recently from the Vicar, Fr. Christopher Walker, that St. Mary's, Headington, Oxford, has a chapel dedicated to King Charles with a stained glass window of the Royal Martyr. It was intended at one time to dedicate the church to him, but it is good to know that he has at least been assigned the role of secondary patron. Oxford featured prominently in the life of our King and Martyr, and it is hoped that devotees in the area will give Fr. Walker their interest and support.

Barrie Williams

A SERMON PREACHED BY

FR. ROYSTON BEALE 30 JANUARY 1995

We are gathered here today to praise and thank God for the sanctity in life and martyrdom in death of King Charles I. It is a celebration that gives us joy, deepens our own faith and commitment to Jesus our Saviour, and affords us encouragement as we obey the martyred king's dying request to remember. The appeal of St Charles to us as Anglicans is very special and precious, and in these times when so much of our heritage and spirituality are under threat our observance today must surely enlighten our minds with renewed conviction for those spiritual treasures of our tradition for which the king died, and warm our hearts with devotion and love to follow in his steps.

Perhaps many here today are suffering a form of bereavement, if not martyrdom, at the loss in our Church of so much we have learnt to love and value.

King Charles is a saint not lost in antiquity, and his character, life and times have been exposed to deep scrutiny, much of it an attempt to devalue the King and his sacrifice. About many qualities of the king there is agreement. He lived a life of personal holiness and purity in domestic and family life, he practised courtesy and consideration for all, he possessed a love of beauty and art and his Christian piety was very deep. It was, however, in the turmoils and upheavals of his age that the king came onto the stage of history. He came to the throne at a time of bitter religious controversy, when men and women were as ready to use their swords as their words to settle religious disputes. Few possessed the same spirit of tolerance as the king, for though firmly rooted in his beloved Church of England he held other traditions in respect. He especially cultivated tolerance, unity and friendship with the Roman Catholic Church. This no doubt had special urgency for him since his mother and wife were both Catholics and his two sons were later to be received into the Roman Catholic Church. The struggle in which the King became involved was for the very soul and life of the Church of England. On the one hand there were those who fought to maintain the Church of England in the faith and practice of the historic Catholic and apostolic Church, with the traditional orders and sacraments being held as vital to Christian living. On the other hand there were those who were determined to destroy the Church, do away with moderation and carry the cause of the Reformation to a fully Protestant conclusion with a Calvinist theology and Presbyterian church government. Immense power was wielded by the Calvinist party in political, social and monetary influence. The King, the Church and, indeed, the people of this land would all be sacrificed to the greed of this powerful faction.

At his coronation on Candlemas Day [2 February], 1625 King Charles was, according to the office then used, girded with a sword "by the hands of Bishops consecrated by the authority of the Holy Apostles for the defence of the Holy Church." He was invested with a ring as "Seal of the Christian Catholic faith." The oaths he took at his coronation and the injunctions he received in that hallowed rite remained ever his lifelong guide and inspiration. We have only to study his writings often composed in prison and isolation to become aware of his holiness, his tenacity and

bravery in defending his received conception of the Christian religion.

Full proof of his will and purpose is to be found in the appointment and advancement of the chosen Bishops - later to be termed the Caroline Divines and revered for their learning and holiness. The greatest of these was Archbishop William Laud, who himself met a martyr's death on Tower Hill in 1645. Preaching at the Tercentenary of Laud's martyrdom in 1895, Bishop Creighton said, "Up to the end King Charles might have saved his throne and his life if he had abandoned the Church and given up Episcopacy." Charles saved the Church of England by his fidelity to its constitution, its history and the treasures it preserved at the time of the Reformation.

Surely then, here is a saint to inspire us as we live our own Christian discipleship in a world that cares little for these values of sanctity and holiness, in a society where the sacrament of holy marriage is little revered and family life destroyed by divorce and dishonour. Surely here is a saint, who as Supreme Governor of the Church of England gave his life to defend it and whose example gives us courage in our struggle for the Church's preservation when so many seek to destroy it from both within and without. It is then, no wonder that we look to St Charles as our patron and defender and he is truly a saint for our times. In the study of St Charles and his life we see demonstrated and lived the Christian virtues of faith, hope and charity. These same virtues we too are bidden to live in our Christian discipleship. The King possessed a living faith in his divine Redeemer and in his eternal purpose for his anointed servant. His soul was daily nourished on the spiritual delights to be found in the Anglican treasury, the Book of Common Prayer and the Authorised Version of the scriptures. He never lost faith in God's providence for the Church he loved even in his darkest hours. It was his deep inner faith that sustained him in his last dread hours when he met a cruel death. Priests and people must delight to practise the virtue of faith. In faith the priest knows that he is offering the Eucharist, pronouncing forgiveness of sins and dispensing sacramental grace and at parish level priest and people have to strengthen the Catholic spirituality that we value and for which King Charles died.

The catholic life of the Church of England is under attack and it may be a lonely struggle in which we sometimes feel isolated and beleaguered. But in this struggle we shall be following St Charles and many other martyrs. Fortunately and happily the sacrament of faith, our Baptism, unites us to the holy Church Catholic, and the Holy Father in his book, 'The Threshold of Hope' assures us that the Church as the mystical body of Christ penetrates and embraces us all. The spiritual, mystical dimensions of the Church are much greater than any sociological statistics could ever possibly show.

The virtue of hope was always present in the King's life and he ever put his trust in God's goodness and providence. Again, it was in his final moments that he demonstrated it to the world when "in sure and certain hope of the Resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ" he proclaimed that he on his deathbed was going from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown.

So God gives us the encouragement of hope learnt and experienced in the past destinies of our Church Only one church was built during the Cromwellian days. It was built by Sir Robert Shirley in 1653 at Staunton Herald on his estate. An inscription over its doorway guarded by two angels tells its story in this way:

"In the year 1653

**When all things sacred were throughout the nation
either demolished or profaned, Sir Robert Shirley,
Baronet, founded this church, whose singular praise
it is to have done the best things in the worst times
and hoped them in the most calamitous.**

So please be full of the joy that comes from practising the virtue of hope. The problems, doubts and uncertainties will not disappear, but wherever our personal journey takes us travel joyfully in the knowledge and certainty of God's eternal goodness - that is the virtue of hope and let it be said of us all, that we have done the best things in the worst times and hoped them in the calamitous. King Charles in his life bore witness to St. Paul's understanding that charity is the greatest of the virtues and in his death he adorned the virtue by praying for his murderers and bestowing upon them forgiveness. That is why, in the special prayer for today we ask Almighty God "that we too may follow the example of his courage and constancy, his meekness and patience and great charity." If through bitterness or even sadness about our ecclesial problems we fail to proclaim the mercy and goodness of God imitated in the virtue of charity then we fail in our Christian response and dishonour the memory of our martyred King.

So then, in endeavouring to honour and imitate our kingly saint let us remind ourselves that we too are the means whereby this charity is incarnate in God's Church and world. On this feast then let us

rejoice and take heart in our celebration once more of the martyrdom of King Charles, for in the righteousness of God's saints God has given us an example of Godly living and in their blessedness a glorious pledge of the hope of our calling.

Further to Allan Smith's article in the last **Church and King**:

"THE KING'S HEAD", GALWAY

by Richard J. Byrne

J. Alan Smith sent me a copy of the issue of **Church and King** containing his article *The Mystery of "The King's Head", Galway*. He had been informed, rightly, that I could contribute some information on the subject.

When the pub was being opened there in 1974. the O'Malley brothers, the owners at the time. asked me as an architectural design consultant and surveyor, to design the interiors of the place. I felt that, being such an old shell, it might look good in the sort of medieval look that it now has.

A persistent local folklore mentioned Gunning and Dean, including Gunning's alleged brag concerning his arm feeling 'the muscles of the King's neck'. I did a bit of nosing around the archives of Galway but could turn up nothing definite on the story. However. I did encounter two elderly ladies in their late eighties living nearby, now both since gone to their rewards, who were adamant that this was the building granted to Gunning and Dean. I could not prove it. Dean was quite a common name in Galway since they were one of the original tribes who founded the city. Gunning, however, is not a common name in the area.

Interestingly though, at the same time I was having some friendly chat with two American professor friends of mine, the Dunleavys. who were the official biographers of Douglas Hyde. our first President, and were, as a result, cataloguing the papers of the Catholic O'Connor Don family. the last High Kings of Ireland, at Clonalis House in Roscommon. Among these papers there turned up an ancient copy of the warrant for the execution of King Charles (it could hardly be the original!) which I and they read with interest: there was no indication of how it came to be there. Another relevant discovery was the fact that, at some time or other in the seventeenth or early eighteenth century, one of the O'Conors married a Miss Gunning!

At any rate, I suggested to the O'Malleys that they call the place "The King's Head", and that they might run with the legend at least, to which they readily agreed. The rest, as they say, is history, or something very like it. Incidentally, it was I who painted the portraits of King Charles and the Executioners: borrowing heavily from the work of others, but they do help to give the place a bit of atmosphere.