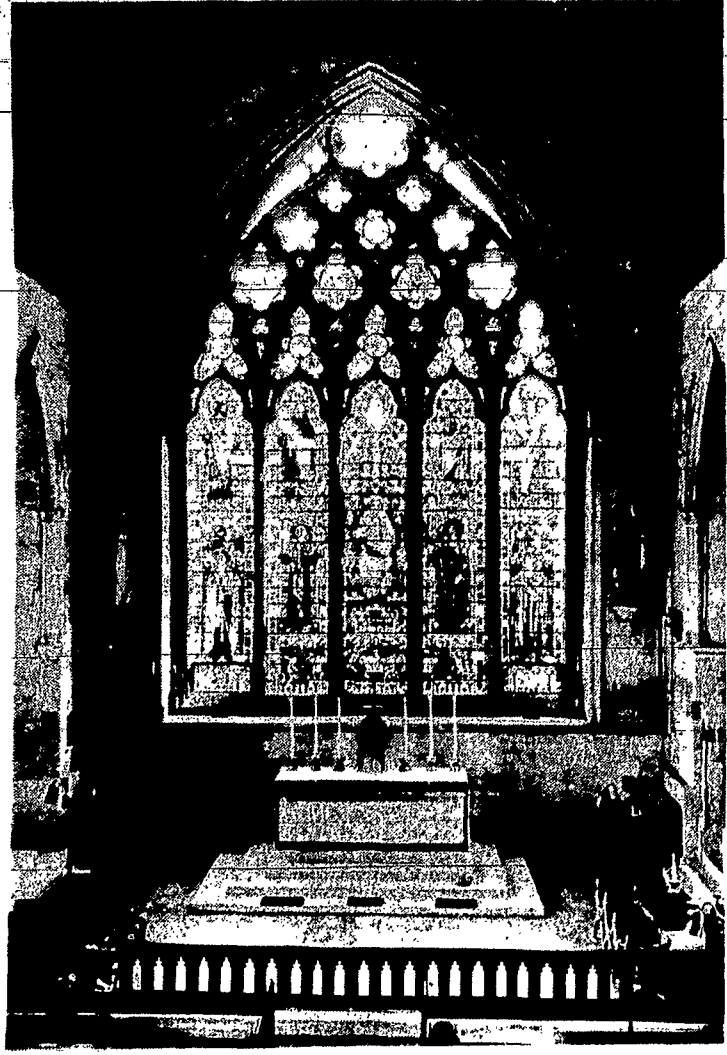


Is there a God? Asks London Newspaperman



Historic St. Etheldreda's Church in London survived Great Fire of Sept. 2 to 5 in 1666 and Nazi blitz.

'Make Us Expect Great Things'

This was the week that was terrifying to Londoners three hundred years ago.

The medieval city, its cathedral and many of its public buildings and hundreds of homes went up in flames in the four day September Great Fire of 1666.

The rebuilt city was again reduced to ruins by Nazi bombs during World War II.

Surviving both holocausts as well as the ravages of sixteen hundred years, however, is the Church of St. Etheldreda on Ely Place in the heart of London.

Few tourists get to see it and many Londoners themselves probably know little or nothing about its history.

Its basement-crypt is actually a fourth century Roman-British structure, perhaps the cathedral of Restitutus, London's bishop about the year 310.

The present church dates from the thirteenth century and the window over the altar is still the largest window in London.

King Henry VIII met Cranmer in the cloister leading to the church, establishing the bond between the prince and prelate who later withdrew the English Church from its allegiance to the Pope. In the following years when the Latin Mass was illegal in England, St. Etheldreda's became a storage house, an office and finally a pub. The Spanish ambassador restored it to church use to be the chapel for his embassy but after the defeat of his country's Armada, the church was turned over for Anglican services.

The Great Fire of London raged up to Ely Place and then the wind changed and that area escaped destruction which left the rest of the city in ruins. The church later became an orphanage and finally closed and abandoned.

In 1874, the property was put up for auction and Father Lockhart, first of the Oxford converts to Catholicism, bought historic St. Etheldreda's and brought the Mass back to its long unused altar. The story had then come full circle, spanning the history of Christianity in England from its feeble origins during the days of the Roman occupation, through its medieval flowering, the turmoil of the Reformation, the "second spring" of the Oxford Movement, the London blitz and into the Beatle era.

Also on Ely Place, near St. Etheldreda's, is the home of John of Gaunt who spoke so eloquently of his homeland, as Shakespeare has memorialized it for us —

This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle, This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars, This other Eden, demi-Paradise, This fortress, built by nature for herself Against infection and the hand of war . . .

When St. Etheldreda's was redecorated after World War II, Monsignor Ronald A. Knox gave the dedication sermon. What he said there on the feast of the Visitation in 1952 seems also applicable to us across an ocean in 1966:

"In a world, in a London, where so much is changing, we can rejoice to find the dream of Father Lockhart still true, John of Gaunt's prophecy still justified after a fashion. Here in the heart of the City we shall be able to find our way to yet another of those little London churches which are so full of atmosphere and of intimacy . . . It shall be at once a link with the past and a proof of the Church's energies; here young minds, full of modern ardours of inquiry, shall graft their new initiatives on the stock of unalterable truth.

"And for ourselves — let us take one glance at ourselves; even on such a happy occasion as this, we must not expect to go away from church without a scolding. Don't let us be content to sit open-mouthed in wonder at those giants of yesterday, Father Lockhart and the rest, asking how it was they managed to speed over the mountains, to spurn the hills, in their impetuous apostolate. They were not men of different mould from ourselves; the message they carried with them was the same as ours. The wonder is rather that we, with such examples before us, are content to pick our way gingerly among the cart-tracks, apprehensive of the least stumble. Do let us ask our Blessed Lady and St. John the Baptist to get us back into the atmosphere of the Visitation, its breathless rhythm of movement; to make us expect great things of God, and play our part as if we were certain that God is doing great things for us . . ."

—Father Henry A. Atwell

The study of theology has focused in our time, appropriately, on God. The Jewish theologian Martin Buber wrote about "The Eclipse of God" and the Rochester theologian William Hamilton speaks about "The Death of God."

The world's Catholic bishops at the Vatican Council admitted that "atheism must be accounted among the most serious problems of this age" and recommends that "all men, believers and unbelievers alike" should engage in "sincere and prudent dialogue" on this subject.

The ways people come to believe in God are almost as varied as the number of people themselves and what convinces one does not convince another.

Herder Correspondence, an international monthly journal, in its July issue, quoted a portion of an article by the well-known London newspaperman Malcolm Muggeridge, a severe critic of all establishments — political, ecclesiastical, social and scientific. The excerpt was intriguing and we thought you would like to read the entire article as it appeared in the New Statesman magazine. It follows in its entirety.

By MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE

Is there a God? Well, is there? I myself should be very happy to answer with an emphatic negative. Temperamentally, it would suit me well to settle for what this world offers, and to write off as wishful thinking, or just the self-importance of the human species, any notion of a divine purpose and a divinity to entertain and execute it.

The earth's sounds and smells and colours are very sweet; human love brings golden hours; the mind at work earns delight. I have never wanted a God, or feared a God, or felt under any necessity to invent one. Unfortunately, I am driven to the conclusion that God wants me.

God comes padding after me like a Hound of Heaven. His shadow falls over all my little picnics in the sunshine, chilling the air; draining the viands of their flavour, talk of its sparkle, desire of its zest.

God takes a hand as history's compeer, turning it into a soap opera, with ham actors, threadbare lines, tawdry props and faded costumes, and a plot which might have been written by Ted Willis himself. God arranges the fighting — Spark of Sparks — so that all the ravages of time, like parched skin, decaying teeth and rotting flesh, show through the make-up, however lavishly it may be plastered on.

Under God's eye, tiny hoarded glories — a little fame, some money . . . Oh! Mr. M. how wonderful you are! — fall into dust. In the innermost recesses of vanity one is discovered, as in the last sanctuaries of appetite, on the highest hill of complacency as in the lowest burrow of despair.

One shivers as the divine being, as it were, gets into the final spring, as the shadow lengthens reducing to infinite triviality all mortal hopes and desires.

There is no escape. Even so, one twists and turns. Perhaps Nietzsche was right when he said that God had died. Progressive theologians with German names seem to think so; Mr. Henry Luce turned over one of his precious covers to the notion.

If God were dead, and eternally had stopped, what a blessed relief to one and all!

Then we could set about making a happy world in our own way — happy in the woods like Melville and Lady C; happiness successfully pursued, a long life with life and liberty, in accordance with the Philadelphia specification; happy the Wilson way, with only one book to take to the post-office — one book one happiness; happy in the prospect of that great Red Apocalypse, when the state has withered away, and the proletariat reign for evermore. If only God were D. H. Lawrence, or Franklin D. Roosevelt, or our Prime Minister, or Karl Marx!

Alas, dead or alive, He is still God, and eternally ticks on even though all the clocks have stopped. I agree with Kierkegaard that what man naturally loves is finitude, and that involvement through God in infinitude kills in him, in the most painful way, everything in which he really finds his life . . . shows him his own wretchedness, keeps him in sleepless unrest, whereas finitude lulls him into enjoyment.

Man, in other words, needs protection against God, as tenants do against Rakhmanism, or minors against hard liquor.

Where is such protection to be found? One of the most effective defensive systems against God's incursions has hitherto been organized religion. The worldly churches have provided a refuge for fugitives from God — His voice drowned in the chanting, His smell lost in the incense, His purposes obscured and confused in creeds, dogmas,

dissertations and other priestly pronouncements. In vast cathedrals, as in little conventicles, or just wrapped in Quaker silence, one could get away from God.

Plainsong held Him at bay, as did revivalist eloquence, hearty hymns and intoned prayers. Confronted with that chanting, moaning, gurgling voice — "Dear beloved brethren, I pray and beseech you . . . or with that earnest, open, Oxford face, shining like the morning sun with all the glories flesh is heir to, God could be relied on to make off.

Unfortunately, this defensive system has now proved to be a Maginot Line, easily by-passed by hordes of happiness pursuers, some in clerical collars and even mitres, joyously bearing a cornucopia of affluence, and scattering along their way birth pills, purple hearts and other goodies — a mighty throng whose tramping feet clear a path as wide as a motorway, along which God can come storming in.

Another defence against God has been utopianism, and the revolutionary fervour that goes

therewith. A passion to change the world and make it nearer to the hearts desire automatically excludes God, who represents the principle of changelessness, and confronts each heart's desire with its own nullity.

It was confidently believed that a Kingdom of Heaven on Earth could be established, with "God, Keep Out!" notices prominently displayed at the off-limits. In practice, the various versions of this Kingdom have one and all proved a failure; utopian hopes washed away in the blood of Stalin's purges, reduced to the dimensions of Mr. Wilson's one book, liberated out of existence.

Few any longer believe in the coming to pass of a perfect, or even a Great, society. There never was a less revolutionary climate than now prevails, when almost any status quo, however ramshackle, can stand. Tito's Franco's Ubricht's. Why, tourism today is a more dynamic force than revolution, swaying, as it does, crowns and thrones; Thomas Cook and the American Express, not the "Internationale," unite the human race. In Africa, it is true, regimes still

totter and fall, but even there the wind of change blows as it listeth. Even when the great day comes, and Dr. Verwoerd and his friends are dispossessed and replaced by a Black Redeemer and his friends, it will be history, not progress, that has spoken.

With the church no longer a sanctuary, and utopianism extinguished, the fugitive from God has nowhere to turn. Even if, as a last resort, he falls back on stupefying his senses with alcohol or drugs or sex, the relief is but short-lived.

Either he will sink without trace for ever into that slough, or, emerging, have to face the inescapable confrontation. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God — thus Kierkegaard (and also Cromwell) groaned in desperation.

What living God? A being with whom one has a relationship, on the one hand, inconceivably more personal than the most intimate human one, to the point that, as we are told, God has actually counted the hairs of each head; on the other, so remote that in order to establish a valid relationship at all, it is necessary to die, to murder one's own flesh with the utmost ferocity, and batter down one's ego as one might a deadly snake, a cobra which has lifted its hooded head with daring forked tongue, to sting.

(I say "a being", which suggests a person, a spirit, a genie coming out of a bottle, and so is utterly inappropriate. There are no adequate words for any of the great absolutes, like life and death, good and evil; only for trivialities like politics and economics and physics. One falls back on the meaningless monosyllable — God, as Hindu sadhus in their spiritual exercises endlessly repeat the equally meaningless monosyllable — Oom.)

What can be said with certainty is that, once the confrontation has been experienced — the rocky summit climbed, the interminable desert crossed — an unimaginably delectable vista presents itself, so vast, so luminous, so enchanting, that the small ecstasies of human love, and the small satisfactions of human achievement, by comparison pale into insignificance.

Out of tactical despair comes an overwhelming strategic happiness, enfolded in which one is made aware that every aspect of the universe, from a tiny grain of sand to the light-years which measure its immeasurable dimensions, from the minute single living cell to the most complex human organism, are intimately related, all deserving of reverence and respect; all shining, like glow-worms, with an inner light, and, at the same time, caught in an all-encompassing radiance, like dust in a sunbeam.

This sense of oneness, with the consequent release from the burden of the self, I take to be God — something which indubitably exists; which not only has not died, but cannot die. Such has been the testimony of those in the past whom I most revere — like Christ, St. Paul, Pascal, Bunyan, Blake and Dostoevsky. To their testimony, with the greatest possible diffidence, I add my own, so hesitant, fitful and inarticulate.

I figured I could do three things on my "L" ride: pray the breviary, read the paper and give all the love I thought my wino brother was capable of receiving, given the shrunken capacity of his humanity.

I suppose some readers will be irritated by my giving him a quarter for more wine. I did not give it to him because he irritated me. I was not trying to buy him off with a few coins. I was not trying to get rid of the guilt feeling that comes with having a five dollar dinner with the knowledge that a hundred people in India could be fed with the price I pay for one meal in a swank restaurant.

No, it was very simple. I gave him the money for wine simply because I loved him as a brother. A little more wine is not going to hurt him in a significant way. I was not dealing with a teen. Nor will he be so overwhelmed by my love that he will stop drinking. No, I expect no change in him. Some one of these days he may be found dead in an alley by the police.

The title of Louis Evely's book has become my conscience, That Man Is You. It is the biblical reference to the story of the prophet Nathan telling David about a man who was a murderer and an adulterer. David was irate in hearing the story of this terrible man. Then Nathan said: "That man is you." David got the message. It was he who was the sinner, not the other guy.

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Meditation in A Subway

By FATHER DENNIS GEANEY, O.S.A.

I was riding downtown on an "L" train — about a twenty-five minute run. I was well stocked with literature: my breviary and the daily paper. It was late morning and the train had empty seats. A drunk came from his seat across the aisle and sat next to me.

He was middle aged with a body odor and clothes in such filth that he could have been sleeping outdoors all night. He was a fairly typical wino. I noticed a tattoo on his wrist as I kept reading my breviary. He interrupted me and asked if I minded his sitting next to me. I replied, "no."

He talked but was not always coherent and then there were long lapses of silence. I answered all his questions very tersely, but urbanely. I marked my breviary with my finger every time I paused to give a quick answer. The situation was not pleasant, but neither did I find it terribly irritating. After five or ten minutes he again asked me if I minded his sitting next to me. By this time I was working through the morning paper. I replied politely, "No, I didn't mind."

Before I got up to leave, I informed him that the next stop was mine. He asked me for a quarter, mumbling why he wanted the money. It did not matter for what purpose he

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He knew I knew where he would spend the money. In ten minutes my coins would be on the counter of a Skid Row winery. I had no complaint. I was glad I had the quarter to give him and thankful that I did not have to bargain with him or give him a quarter when he asked for fifty cents.

All through the psalms of David which I prayed from my breviary and the cries of the people everywhere as they came to me while I read the paper, I was meditating. Who was this man beside me? What did he mean to me? No matter what shape he was in or what stench came from him, he was my brother.

I fully accepted him on these terms. I did not lecture him. I was not interested in reforming him. I was not overly polite to him to the point of putting down my breviary or newspaper. I simply accepted him as a brother who happened to be a wino. Excessive politeness, which often masks hostility, is not characteristic of the way we treat a true brother.

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People of God

Sister Mary Corita, one of America's most successful graphic designers, started teaching art after her entrance into the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Her main interest lay in print-making, especially serigraphs — handprints requiring separate stencils for each color. Her work is widely acclaimed in both liturgical and secular circles. Now Art Professor at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles, Sister Corita spends part of the year traveling around the country to lecture and demonstrate her technique and theories of art to students.

Who Suffers when Growing Crops are Destroyed?

I have looked in vain for any evaluation in moral terms by Catholic spokesmen of the now official admission that United States planes are engaged in spraying "chemicals lethal to plant life" on a massive and expanding scale, on growing crops in South Vietnam.

Until recently, it was asserted that the crop spraying was a small-scale operation conducted by the Saigon air force, with our involvement limited to supplying 2, 4-D and 2, 4, 5-T, weedkillers available in any hardware store.

To the average American, that may sound pretty harmless. As editor for 12 years of an internationally-distributed agricultural magazine, one of whose major purposes was to instruct on the proper use of modern agricultural chemicals, I happen to know differently.

They can not only kill plants 15 miles from the point of diffusion, when sprayed from the air, as the New York Times reported recently from Saigon. They are dangerous and can be lethal to humans and animals. They can cause a disturbance of the ecology which may not be restorable for generations.

Two writers in the "Christian Century", probably the most important magazine

of Protestant opinion in this country, have raised more basic issues. The writers, Jean Mayer and Victor Sidel, are respectively a nutritionist and a specialist in preventative medicine, and both currently teach at Harvard.

"As a nutritionist who has seen famine on three continents, one of them Asia, and as a physician with a basic interest in preventative medicine," they write, "we can say flatly that there never has been a famine or a food shortage — whatever might have been its cause — which has not first and overwhelmingly affected the small children."

I shall spare my readers the authors' clinical description of the effects of starvation, noting only the wasting of fat deposits, loss of absorptive capacity of the intestinal lining which self-accelerates starvation and promotes diarrhea, and the permanent physical deformation. I do, however, want to refer to one aspect of the psychologic deterioration, an obsession with food, because I myself once observed it in a way I can never forget.

In 1939, I invited to dinner in my home in Ireland an Austrian fellow newsmen, a Jewish refugee from his homeland recently seized by Hitler. This man's wife

had experienced the fat shortage resulting from the allied blockade of middle Europe in the 1914-18 war. More than twenty years later, she still piled butter on her bread at my table so that the thickness of the butter was greater than that of the bread.

That allied blockade caused deficiency diseases and starvation among German and Austrian children, the authors in "The Christian Century" note, but it did not interfere with the operation of the armies of the Central Powers. Nor did Sherman starve the South into submission. The Confederates had to be beaten on the battlefield. In Leningrad as many as 9,000 a day, mostly children and the elderly, starved to death in 1941-42, yet the city never surrendered.

In the Vietnam situation, dealing with an enemy willing to sacrifice everything and everyone to his objective, famine as a counterweapon could succeed only if pursued to the inhuman extreme of destruction of all food and of the society. Before the Vietcong would feel any impact, there would have to be total social disruption, a mass flight from the land, break-up of families, formation of foraging gangs of murderers and cannibals, epidemics of plague, malaria, cholera and smallpox,

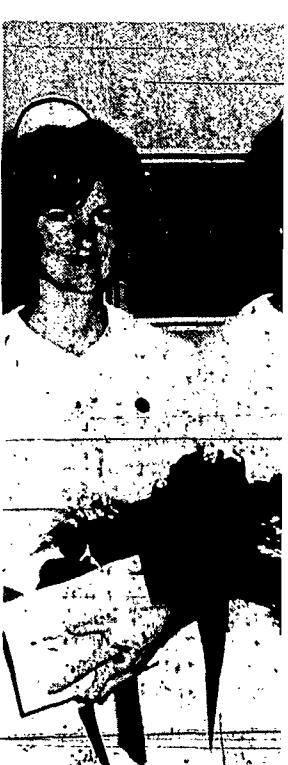
the traditional four horsemen of Asian hunger.

The official position of the United States administration is that the food destruction program, although substantially escalated this year, is not intended to reach such an extreme. If that is the fact, it is condemnable not only on moral grounds, but on political and military grounds, too. On military grounds, because it is a waste of men and materials. On political grounds, because if its negative impact on world opinion not only among our enemies but among our friends.

"We base our case, therefore," to sum up in the words of the "Christian Century" authors, "on the undeviating pattern of past famines when we state that crop destruction constitutes a war measure primarily if not exclusively directed at children, the elderly and pregnant and lactating women. In other words, our point is not that innocent bystanders will be hurt by such measures but that only the bystanders will be hurt. The primary U.S. aim — to disable the Vietcong — will not be achieved and our proclaimed secondary aim — to win over the civilian population — is made a hollow mockery."



ALL SMILES follow last Sunday a Nursing are Elm



AWARD WINN are shown with I erdges; Karen K Helen Bernhardt

Masse In Nev

Parishioners of St. M the Lake Church, East Road, Ontario, will be ing Mass Sunday, Sep the new church just co on Walworth Road.

After ninety-six year itence, the door will ed on the small, white building, that served t olic people of Ontario, neighboring towns of W and Williamson.

Due to crowded conditi cause of the increase i tion of these rural c ties, it was necessary to the number of Sunday from two to five in t fifteen years. Still, t these Masses were filled capacity.

Now, parishioners w either the 8, 9:15, 10:3 noon service in the church with plenty of Standing will not be n and the choir loft will served for the organ choir members.

Work on the new l was started last August the lining up of the flo of the building under l revision of Richard Lini Anthony Link Sons con company of Rochester.

A large, colored gla dow designed by Ja O'Hara of the Pikes Glass Studios, compri whole vertical wall ab entrance doors fronting Walworth Road. The n this window was on di a Church Art Exhibit Midtown Plaza in Ro this past Spring.

The memorial wind the north and south e the church, also desig O'Hara, will refer to pr

Red Mass Se Tues., Sept. 1

Annual Laymen's Red be celebrated by Bisho ney will take place in seph's Church, Frank Tuesday, Sept. 13 at 9 cording to Supreme Co tice Daniel J. O'Hara, chairman of arrange. Judges, attorneys and citizens of Rochester this Mass, celebrated es in observance of the ope the courts of justice. I plans will be announce week, Justice O'Hara as