

CHRISTIANS AGAINST ALL ANIMAL ABUSE

FOR AUTUMN & WINTER: 2007

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'Precious in the sight of The lord is the death of his saints'. Such is a quotation from the psalms, and I'm sure that it's not confined to those marble faced type canonised by past pontiffs. Yes, and thankfully, during the century that has just gone, many of these 'saints' were thrown out after centuries of veneration. All part of the reforming work of good 'John the 23rd'! Not the result of senility as some quite uncharitably supposed, but rather because of his desire to bring about a reformation within, which went well past any medieval council of Trent.

Some of the saints I, myself, have in mind were those within the cause of animal liberation; and some of them were, indeed, far removed from one's traditional profession of faith. I think of **Jill Phipps** and of **Barrie Horne**. I'd offered to conduct the funeral of the former, before Coventry cathedral's provost intervened with his rigid conditions; and I'd made a one-man protest outside the York hospital of the latter! However, the general opinion of animal rights activists towards Christian clergy hardly endeared them towards my own feeble efforts for their cause. After all, these two comparatively young folk would, literally, lay down their lives for the animals; reminiscent of far off 'good shepherds' prepared to lay down their lives for sheep and used by Christ as His supreme analogy.

Indeed, let us not forget also the sacrifice of her life - for the animals - of **Vicki Moore!** Tossed repeatedly by a frenzied bull after the latter had been repeatedly stabbed and goaded, Vicki - momentarily carried away - had jumped over in to the ring to acquire close ups of the barbarity taking place. Yes, a true saint whose memorial service was in Liverpool's Protestant cathedral as she had ultimately turned her back upon the Catholicism which had nurtured her but had quite inconsistently supported bullfights!

Vicki, of course, was not alone in openly criticizing her own churches apathy - nay support! - for bull fights and similar blood 'sports'. We must never ever forget **Hans Fishinger** whose rebuke of his own church was most vehement. Indeed, the way he slated Cardinal Rattssinger over the New Catholic Catechism was reminiscent of a John The Baptist. Of course, he was not alone. Several devout members of the Catholic Study Circle For Animal Welfare assured me that they would terminate affiliation to their church should Rattssinger ever become next pope. Well, he did! But they haven't joined another. For them it's been, I sense, a matter of 'better to stay with the devil you know than the ones you don't know'!

One also thinks of true Anglican **Michael Sutcliffe**. Yes, as mentioned in a previous News Letter, he had the marks and breeding of a true English gentleman and was, consistently, a practising Christian in every way. And why should I be on such a subject as the discussion of deceased 'gems' such as these? Is it because I'm typing this start of the newsletter after Armistice Day: a day when we remember the massacre of thousands of soldiers, seamen and airman? A day when, annually, we remember such tragic human casualties and deaths; *yet prefer to forget the abominable suffering of so very many horses in battle, not to mention mascots and birds!* I tell you - that for me - it's more than that:

Though several books might refer to "the animals' padre" - yes, in one fashion or another! - only one has been dedicated to me: a small book, fully reflecting factors I have stood for, in scripture and theology. And its dedication by the beautiful author **Regina Hyland** - a true saint 'recently promoted to glory' - now quite wrenches my heart when ever I read it:

'This book is dedicated to the Reverend James Thompson, an Anglican priest known as "the Animals' Padre". In both his ministry to the animals and his ministry to people, he has always chosen to follow the Gospel of Christ rather than the doctrines of men.'



Yes, I can only say that it was with intense sorrow and heartache that Doreen and I learned of the sudden and unexpected demise of the Reverend Regina from Sarasota. Here again we have a lady who, after being cradled in Catholicism, underwent a deep spiritual experience ultimately leading to her inception into the American Pentecostalist ministry (not to be confused with much of the Pentecostal fundamentalism of the UK!). But, even then, her first book to be published: 'Sexism Is Sin' would eventually result in her ostracism from that same movement. And, no doubt, this would be accelerated by her involvement in perceiving a place for animal rights as consistent with divine revelation. The fact is that, though an ordained Pentecostalist, her depth of academic learning appeared to have made her, in my own mind, to be more consistently a full-blown Unitarian than representative of, a largely, fundamentalist movement

Yes, Regina in her early seventies, had become very much akin in theology to myself, and I cannot thank Jesus enough for every remembrance of her. Also – like myself – she was much indebted to **Hans Ruesch** and the pioneering work he did for animal rights. Appropriately, in her same compact and yet profound publication she uses the 'Acknowledgments' section to highlight a kindred spirit who'd 'passed over' before her self:

'I would like to acknowledge the pioneering work of Hans Ruesch, author of Slaughter Of The Innocent and Naked Empress. His integrity and refusal to yield to self serving speciesism in the struggle against vivisection is unsurpassed – and, for the most part, unmatched.'

Plagiarism & Tunnel Vision

Well, one thing of which I feel pretty sure is that they'll have a lot to talk about 'up there'! And I equally feel that they have not forgotten us down here. I tell you this: such folk are spurring us on from the battlements above. We who are in the arena for animal rights are never deserted: their presence is with us, and we must always make ourselves aware of this. These – along with very many more – are the real saints of the whole movement for animal liberation. So take heart and fight on! The new Anglican hymnal published by Catholic publisher Kevin Mayhew and called COMPLETE ANGLICAN has the arrogance to substitute 'Onward Christian Soldiers Marching As To War' with 'Onward Christian Pilgrims; Christ will be our light'. It's a plagiarism of surely the worst kind? I ask: what would Reverend S. Baring Gould, its author - or, indeed, General William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army! - think of such 'playing down' of New Testament military terms within today's bland laodicean churches? They must not only be turning but, indeed, *revolving* in their graves!

As for the Anglican Book Of Common Prayer, it exhorts us daily to '*pray for the church militant here on earth*'; but quite regrettably the basic worship book of Anglicanism is now being less and less used. Prayers that were written by Archbishop Cranmer and other fellow martyrs, are frequently discarded by pompous prelates, or conceited clerics in circles, concocting prayers that ring as shallow as do – I'll not say it! - so many of our modern hymns. Need one wonder that places of worship, all around us, are being put up for sale?

I'm thankful to God that though it was confirmed eight years ago by no less than two top eye specialists that I had macular degeneration; the wet type which is the most deadly; and that being in both eyes I could be blind – apart from peripheral vision! – I can truthfully say that my sight is better today than it was then. However, what one of the other specialists also confirmed was that I was also suffering with Glaucoma. In other words – left untreated daily – I could equally lose my peripheral vision. The ultimate end would be total darkness'. Well, thank God, I never accept dogmatically affirmed negative remarks. I look for rejuvenation rather than regression; and what side we habitually focus on, more often than not, gets clearer and clearer. Consequently, I never focus for long on the morbidity and horror of animal exploitation. I channel the emotions that 'well up' so as to make me physically propelled by 'righteous wrath' and indignation; seeking to release all the force through constructive action

However, returning to unchecked Glaucoma which results in an ever-increasing narrowness of tunnel vision it is – metaphorically speaking – the damnable disease of our churches' leadership. In fact, it's not confined to them but via our theological colleges, a 'stinted form of compassion' – as if from God Himself! - is being perpetuated; and - sad to say it! - my previous Oxford college may not be immune from this 'exclusive to man' form of redemption.

The 'Reformed' Theology, As Guilty As The Roman!

The new influx of students entering Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, is a delight to behold. They would not be averse to calling themselves Baptized in the Spirit, born again and on their way to Glory. And much of this is due to the selection system of recruitment and the utter dedication of the new Principal to the Gospel message. Nevertheless, his most recent appointment to his staff has been the wife of the C. Of E.'s most notorious hunting parson: Toddy Hoare! And I'm not getting at the fellow who appears most affable. But I simply cannot understand how he, or his dear wife – newly appointed '*lecturer in prayer and spirituality*' – can reconcile her two subjects she's presumably specialised in, with hunting and shooting for which her husband has become notorious. Indeed, the article on the right is from the spiritually empty '**Church of England Newspaper**' of August the 31st.

Toddy's two brief theological works just do not hold water for me in relation with the moral peaks of a progressive biblical revelation. I honestly don't see how they can! Need I, therefore, wonder why so many of those animal activists who are prepared to lay down their lives for animals, have washed their hands of the clergy and their various churches? Indeed, whenever I turn up at a demo or a vigil they look quite dumbfounded; and frequently they remark: '*great to see you, but where are the rest of your type. They don't care a toss for the animals!*' And, of course, they are right! The fact is that evangelical Protestantism – particularly the Calvinistic branch - is frequently as guilty as Roman Catholicism. And that – very sadly – now appears to include the college through which I once graduated on my transition from the Congregational ministry

By Michael Brown

ONE of England's last and best known hunting and shooting parsons is leaving his country churches – all eight of them – after a quarter of a century.

The Rev Toddy Hoare, vicar of the Hillside parishes near Thirsk, North Yorkshire, held his last official services on Sunday and will hand over the vicarage keys in October.

Mr Hoare, who is also a sculptor, will be 60 in November. He is moving to Oxford where his second wife Liz has been appointed tutor in prayer, spirituality and mission at Wycliffe Hall theological college.

He said at the weekend: "The marriage contract was that if my wife got a job she could not refuse, I would step down. I think it is actually opportune to step down while everybody will quite happily have more of me."

Toddy Hoare trained as a sculptor at the City and Guilds of London School of Arts and was studio assistant to John Mills and the late Cecil Thomas.

He said: "I've got access to a studio, so I am retiring from parish life and shall be working on sculpture, prayer and scripture."

in to the Anglican priesthood. Yes, in 1966, a Hall in which one would share Anglican studies, and a never to be forgotten fellowship, with a Jesuit priest, an Orthodox archimandrite, a living saint of an Anglo catholic called John Wright; and, while many younger students clapped hands for Jesus round a noisy piano, two others burned incense in their rooms to accompany their devotions.

Two Animal Blessing Services In One Month!

Yes, this is certainly one way to get our message across, and it can be a wonderful way of instilling in to young minds that the strong must never exploit the weak, but that we who are born in to the guardian species have a tremendous responsibility to care for 'lesser' species than our own. Again the supreme analogy is in Jesus identifying His character with humble shepherds prepared to lay down their lives for four legged animals.



. The top two photos were taken in a local Baptist chapel. The one to the top right is that of a poor creature that had been severely kicked by young thugs and was now recuperating in Capricorn animal sanctuary where I'm patron. The lower photos were taken in a local Parish Church where the dear Vicar has been, well and truly, won over to our cause and we shared the service together..





What is more - wonders never cease! -only yesterday, a Methodist circuit steward has asked, on behalf of his Minister, if I would care to consider holding an animal blessing service in one of the churches in her busy circuit. This will be another opportunity to further the cause via pulpit, praise and prayer; and not forgetting, of course, a literature stall!

'Lest We Forget' The Animals!

Dear Cynthia O'Neil, of past Hillgrove fame near Oxford, has made a courageous come-back regardless of much sickness and invalidity. Like myself, she believes that God is with her as she bravely speaks out for our animal brethren. Indeed, this time she has not only inaugurated a nurses fellowship to oppose vivisection – see:www.nmrm.org which means: Nurses Movement For Responsible Medicine.

But she has also highlighted to me the drab condition of war memorials for animals and pigeons. The photo appended is of Cynthia on Armistice Day this year, at the memorial near Hyde Park. Indeed, Cynthia struggled in her disablement to get to the site. She waited and prayed for those innocent creatures that had been goaded in to two past World Wars; and how many more activists were there to join her as it struck eleven? No more than two others who were also, obviously, very dedicated and compassionate. Well, I know this that 'God Willing', there'll be a special service at the site next year because I'll be down there myself . Yes, to join Dear Cynthia – and I trust, many more! – and to ask God for forgiveness concerning the thousands of animals that suffered through man's instigation of unjust warfare.



Cynthia remembers, and later two more remembered! Cynthia was there alone for a full hour. Where were the Forces, the padres and – sad to say it! – the local animal activists?

The Christian churches hardly ever recovered after the 1914-18 war. I learned from war veterans, first hand, how even the occupants of the pulpits had endorsed 'to the hilt' the notorious placards of Kitchener, with the words: *'your country needs you!'* Need one wonder that the very cream of the nation who survived then turned their backs on the so-called leaders of Christianity? The fact is that during such an era the voice and authority of the various church leaders held tremendous moral sway; yet they came across, in Isaiah's words, *'as dumb dogs that cannot bark'*. Yes, anthropocentric jellyfish; with apologies to the latter!

During both the First and Second World Wars, which our politicians plunged us in to, the church hierarchies could have intervened in the name of Jesus Of Nazareth who said: *'Love your enemies!'* But instead, they proved shamelessly mute; And certainly in the latter war with Germany, none proved as shameless as Pope Pius the 12th. For had *he* commanded that the Catholics of Germany and Britain - and their respective allies - must love one another, and must consider war between them as nothing less than mortal sin – then the church of which he was pontiff would have been as a heaven sent beacon, or a 'city set on a hill to which all nations would have been drawn'. Instead, he had already been responsible for signing a concordat with Hitler - and his leading henchmen. Yet - quite amazingly - there have been Catholics in this present decade who have eagerly sought to bring about canonisation – sainthood! – for this person they even now still proudly refer to as a past 'Vicar Of Christ!'

Mind you, 'let not the frying pan call the kettle black!', for how many of us – excepting many Salvationists, all Jehovah Witnesses and Quakers! – would be willing to stand by and let our children, wives and fellow humans be butchered or raped if it were in our power by force or arms to stop it? Indeed, if the average citizen will not intervene to stop defenceless creatures from being 'led as a lamb to the slaughter' because it could be contrary to the law of the land, such citizens are hardly ever likely to 'fight in defence' of humans. Yet, as a great man of insight stated: 'As long as there are slaughterhouses there will also be battlefields'. How true!

Yes, indeed, we must never instigate war. We must love our enemies and be aware of the fact that: *'he who takes up the sword will perish by the sword'*. However, Jesus surely equally implied that His followers needed to defend themselves as well as the defenceless and vulnerable: *'Let him that has not got a sword go out and buy one!'* Sadly, far too many, pick out certain sayings of Jesus while they conveniently ignore other ones. 'A little knowledge is a dangerous thing' and this is never truer than in quoting the holy scriptures of Christendom.

And as for breaking lower laws that relate to property so as to fulfil laws relating to charity, we have Jesus Himself, desecrating laws relating to the former as well as to established religion, For one example: in order to liberate defenceless pigeons and oxen from ritual slaughter, He cleansed the temple! Therefore, in a very practical sense, the ones who come closest to following His example today are - in my mind – many of the dedicated animal liberationists; and I salute them! Somehow, I feel sure that if Jesus of Nazareth were with us in the flesh today, then He'd chose a balaclava in preference to any Canterbury cap, biretta or mitre!

Brief Review Of A Brilliant Book

Keith Mann's truly wonderful 660-page book complete with an index and with 107 illustrations is, indeed, 'a true classic for the cause'. No publication up to now that I have come across is as inspiring, as easy to read, and as gripping, as this living saint's publication. Yes a living saint for God's animal creation! His is a thick book, indeed, but with a soft cover. So be careful when folding back the pages; or offering to loan it out as it could return with a broken spine! Such a large and lengthy volume could turn lesser 'book worms' off reading it! Yet I can assure any activist who starts to read this monumental work that once they do they'll not be able to put it down. And from a literary approach Keith's inimitable style, revealing grotesque cruelty, but compensating with frequent humour as the work of liberation takes place, saves one from wanting to put it down as macabre and depressing. Animal liberationists are such a happy lot, even when so unjustly incarcerated in prison for coming to the rescue of vulnerable animals. The chapters are also short. Indeed, I could even recommend the large publication as 'a book at bedtime' because each small chapter gets one wanting to read the next. And - like I've said - parts that touch on cruelty so often have such a happy thread through them.

I have read many publications – frequently the outcome of works pursued for a doctoral thesis - and though informative, they are usually as dull, dead and depressing as their introverted creators who are missing out on life. Well, such negative remarks could never be said Of Keith Mann's monumental achievement for such a noble cause: the pursuit of animal liberation. The literary style reflects the sparkle and 'zest for living' of its writer who combines a 'happy go lucky' charm with a deeply compassionate heart for all life that suffers. And as for any criticism then I have hardly a remark to make as Keith Mann is still comparatively young in years, and things I could have touched upon were no longer a problem when Keith began 'demo-ing' so forcefully; soon to be put in prison for a most unjust length of sentence. 'The punishment inflicted on Keith Mann *did not* fit the crime!' Yet he did not go under, because the cause for which he fought went with him. Consequently, rather than go in to a shell of doom and gloom, he went from strength to strength, using each knock as a knock forward and each stumbling block as a potential stepping-stone. To touch in depth on any of the contents of this publication would be comparable to two ladies in a cinema I once sat behind. One had seen the film before "Don't get worried; he doesn't die at this point!" She blurted out as if for all to hear. "He's not the baddy; she's the real bitch who later poisons him!" Well, I poked her in the back with my finger and said: "Thank you, you have truly ruined my night!" "What's he on about?" she muttered to her friend in a low voice" Meanwhile, I made my way out along the dark and narrow row of seats behind. For her, the penny just hadn't dropped!

FROM DUSK TILL DAWN, by Keith Mann, (660 pages & 137 illustrations) Price £19.99 (including p&p), is available from author: Keith Mann, BM2636. London WCIN3XX. Please make out cheques to: K. Mann

Concessions 'To Be Cruel' Made For Religion!

Yes, indeed, we live in a very sick world when we allow concessions for cruelty to be granted in the name of religion. Indeed, how dare we call Yahweh or Allah 'The All Compassionate One' when we perpetrate unnecessary cruelty in His name!

It is high time that Christian animal activists took to the streets and said 'enough is enough' Far too many clergy – and laity too! – will only show their colours when encircled by the converted. However, this is not so for these lovely ladies I was privileged to support outside the Rhyl based Asda supermarket.



We couldn't get to Birmingham, where Asda is blatantly and unashamedly selling 'unstunned', ritually slaughtered meat so we did the next best thing; we protested outside a local branch of theirs! And that God was pleased with our efforts was surely revealed when – in the midst of a wet and extremely boisterous morning – the sun came out and a beautiful rainbow shone overhead. In case you can't make it out, the wording on the photo I'm holding - taken by Judi Hewitt on my left, who'd organised the vigil - it reads as follows: 'Will ewe please treat me with respect and let me live?' 'I'm not a lamb chop or a leg of lamb. I'm a living being just like you.



The Superb Work Of NOWALE

What is more, the same picture and inscriptions first appeared in a superb, colourful magazine, which is the work of another two stalwarts: Jim & Lillian Buckner! What this dedicated and now elderly couple have done for the animal cause is no ones business! Sufficient to say that It puts my own efforts quite in to the shade! Come rain or snow, blizzard or sunshine, gentleman Jim and dear Lillian (in photo above) have struggled against increasing ill health 'to stop the exploitation and live export of defenceless farm animals'. While larger causes draw in the money so as to pay well-remunerated staff, it appears quite inconceivable that the work of smaller groups – which more often than not, do a greater work in comparison – have to struggle on a shoe string. To learn of the work NOWALE so altruistically accomplish – why not send a stamped addressed envelope with a request to learn more about the work they do? Yes, and usually, very much behind the scenes: Jim & Lillian Buckner NOWALE, Souldern, Bicester. Oxon. OX6 9

Doreen Joins Me In Wishing You Every Conceivable Blessing For Christmas & 2008

